



WORLD TOUR 2010



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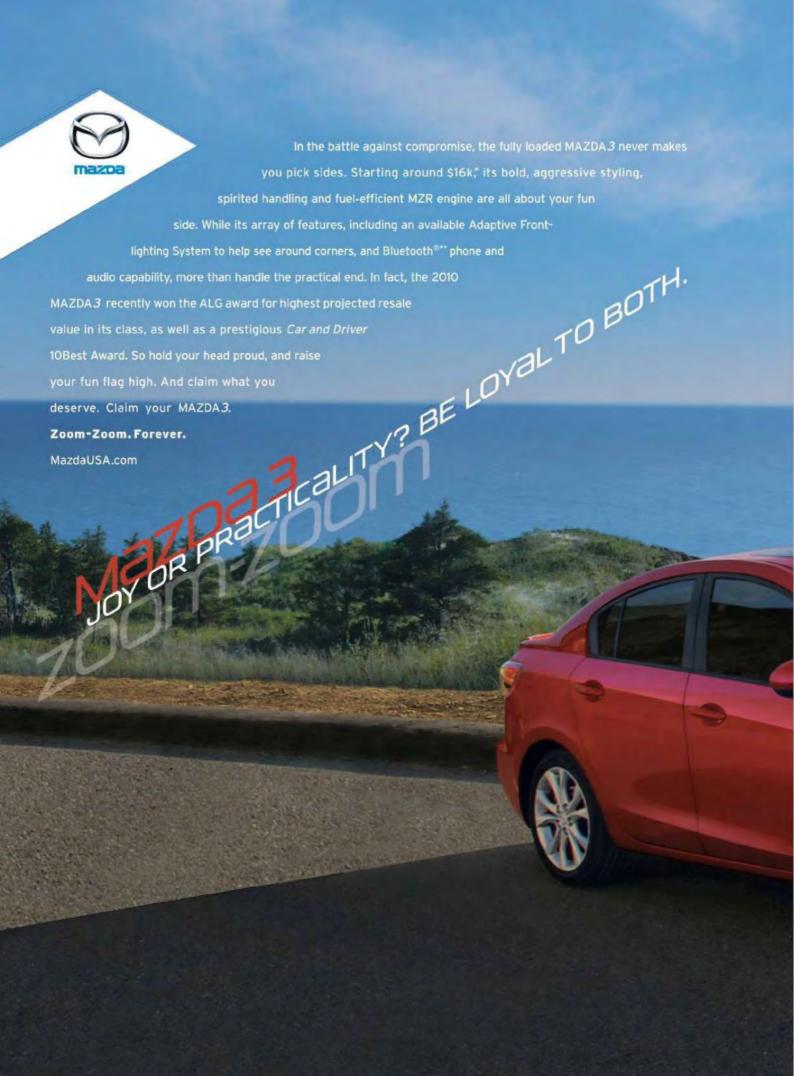
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2010 UPCOMING - THE E.N.D. WORLD TOUR DATES -

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7.09 KINROSSHIRE, UNITED KINGDOM 7.10 PUNCHESTOWN, IRELAND 7.12 WERCHTER, BELGIUM 7.18 SARNIA, ONTARIO 7.24 HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA 7.27 TORONTO, ONTARIO 7.28 TORONTO, ONTARIO 7.31 MONTREAL, QUEBEC 8.01 OTTAWA, ONTARIO 8.03 BOSTON, MA 8.04 NEWARK, NJ 8.06 HARTFORD, CT 8.07 ATLANTIC CITY, NJ 8.10 BALTIMORE, MD 8.11 BUFFALO, NY 8.13 CHICAGO, IL 8.14 ST. LOUIS, MO 8.18 WINNIPEG, MANITOBA 8.20 SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

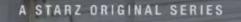
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On the Cover

Black Eyed Peas: Will.i.am, Fergie, Taboo and Apl.de.ap (from left), photographed by Mark Seliger at Orbit Studios, Minneapolis, March 23rd, 2010.

March 23rd, 2010.

Styling by B. Åkerlund at the Magnet Agency. Hair by Andy Lecompte for Phyto at Solo Artists. Makeup by Ronit Shapow. Grooming by Jason Medina. Will.iam's Jacket by Ato, shirt by John Sullivan, pants by Diesel, belt by Ego Katchatori, studded belt by Hollywood Trading Co., glove by Yohan, armband by i.am Clothing. Fergie's bodysuit by Espaco Fashion, belt by Fleet Ilya, earrings and bracelet by Alexis Bittar, ring by Noir, shoes by Giuseppe Zanotti, Taboo's Jacket by Obscure, pants by All Saints, boots by Rick Owens, scarf by Ernte. Apl.de.ap's glasses by Porsche, Jacket by Skingraft, pants by Songzio Homme, gloves by Sermoneta, boots by Bess NYC.

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RECORD SHOPPING WITH FLORENCE AND THE MACHINE

Art-rocker Florence Welch on her favorite Bob Dylan song and her Turkish folk-rock obsession.

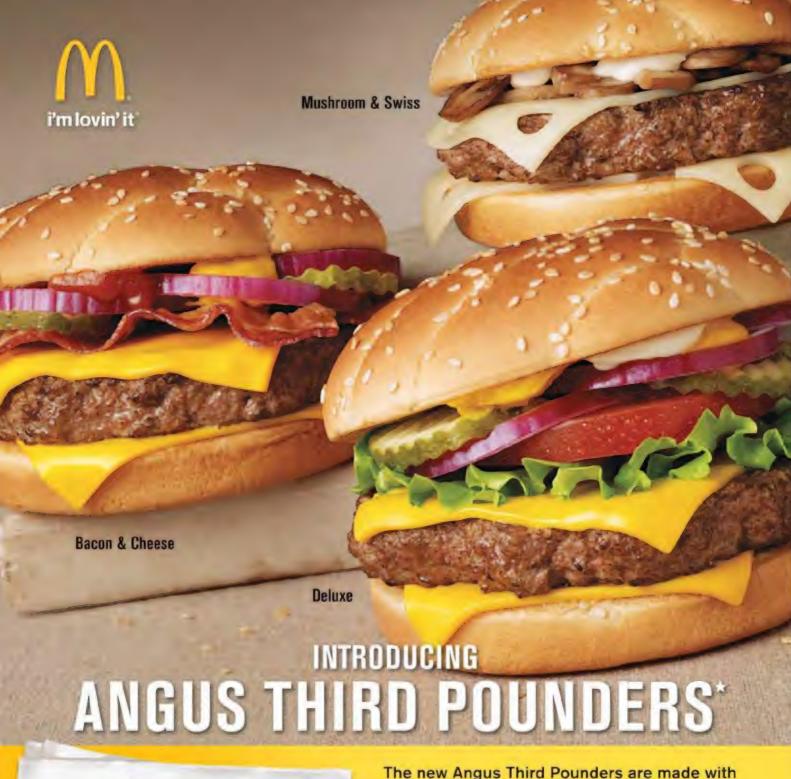


ERE'S ANOTHER THING we're excited about. On April 19th, we'll be launching a redesigned, reimagined rollingstone .com. The new site will be cleaner and easier to navigate, and we'll be augmenting our regular doses of daily rock news, photo galleries and music reviews with new audio and video features - you'll be able, for instance, to instantly listen to any piece of music you read about on the site, and we'll be posting more performances by musicians who visit our offices. In addition, we'll be debuting three new blogs: Rob Sheffield on pop culture, David Fricke on music and Matt Taibbi on politics.



Another portion of the site, "Rolling Stone All Access," will offer those who sign up the full contents of each new issue as it hits newsstands. And, for the first time ever, we'll be granting All Access readers the key to the entire ROLLING STONE archives. You'll be able to lose yourself in every issue since we started back in San Francisco in November 1967. Every review we ever published, every cover and the deepest, most thoughtful interviews with rock legends, from John Lennon to Lil Wayne, Bob Dylan to Kurt Cobain - and 43 years of journalism that has defined our times, from Hunter S. Thompson to P.J. O'Rourke to Matt Taibbi. Give yourself a few hours, and you'll find yourself immersed in the stories of our era: the good times and the bad, the culture, the politics and all the ridiculous hairstyles. We hope you'll stop by and see us.

-WILL DANA, Managing Editor



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Correspondence ≡{ Love Letters & Advice }≡



Jimi's Encore

NOW MORE THAN EVER. it is an absolute pleasure to see Jimi Hendrix on the cover ["Jimi's Last Ride," RS 1101]. You see talentless and undeserving people on the 10,000 magazine covers at the supermarket every day. To spot Jimi next to them was a dash of color in a drab. gray world.

Michael Forrest Huntington Beach, CA

DAVID FRICKE'S HENDRIX story was outstanding. It's why I read ROLLING STONE. Both young and old need to be reminded of our rock & roll past.

Darion Lynn, Richmond, VA

THANKS FOR INFORMING me about the final act of Hendrix's life. Before reading this article, it was always difficult to reconcile the psychedelic maestro with the gritty, greasy and soulful musician backing the Isley Brothers and Little Richard. Now I see that his artistic alchemy doesn't seem much different from that of the blues and gospel greats who preceded him. Like Jimi, they wanted to acknowledge the pain and pleasure of life, with a peek at some sort of celestial glory.

Wayne Trujillo, Denver

Weed Nation

GREAT FEATURE ON THE pot industry ["Marijuanamerica." RS 11011. We need more thinking like this if we are going to heal the shattered economy.

> Justin Lafitte Logans Port, LA

AS MARK BINELLI'S ARTIcle proves, it's time to legalize pot. Let growers harvest without fear of imprisonment. Then tax it just like you would tobacco. The revenue would justify changing the laws and would take income from organized crime, allowing police to concentrate on more serious offenders.

Joseph Mills, Chicago

LEGALIZATION WILL BE A mixed blessing for growers: They will be able to operate in the open but will have to learn how to fend off corporate domination. The folks who will benefit most from legalization will be old hippies like myself who hate to pay \$120 a quarter-ounce for overly stinky weed that is debatably better than the great stuff I used to smoke for \$10 a lid.

> Michael Northuis Greensboro, NC

King Coal

JEFF GOODELL'S ARTIcle vividly demonstrates Big Coal's continued rape of our natural resources ["Coal's Toxic Sludge," RS 1101]. As to the question he posed - "Can Obama crack down on America's secondbiggest river of industrial waste?" - we got the answer to that in Obama's decision to expand oil and gas exploration in some of America's most sensitive coastal waters. Anybody expecting an end to George Bush's woeful environmental policies is sadly mistaken.

Lawrence Abel, Sun Diego

YOU ASK IF THE EPA HAS the "political will to do the right thing?" Here's the answer: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and West Virginia are swing states where coal is key; that's why you can't say anything bad about coal and be elected president of the U.S. Informed articles like this one about coal's hazardous and externalized costs are potent reminders to focus on abundant, clean and reliable renewableenergy technologies.

David Kantz, Coloma, CA

Punk Pioneer

THANKS FOR THE MARvelous Iggy Pop interview [Q&A, RS 1101]. If the rock pantheon has a Dionysus, it would definitely be Iggy. Your interview captures him perfectly: charming, crude and totally honest.

> Kalliope Dalto Via the Internet

Ticket Scam

THANKS FOR STEVE KNOPper's report on scalpers ["Wiseguvs." Rock & Roll, RS 1101]. Scalpers make it impossible for music fans to get the ultimate concert experience. For all those trying to get a decent seat, I hope these "wiseguys" get a front-row seat in jail.

> Holly Almasian Newport News, VA

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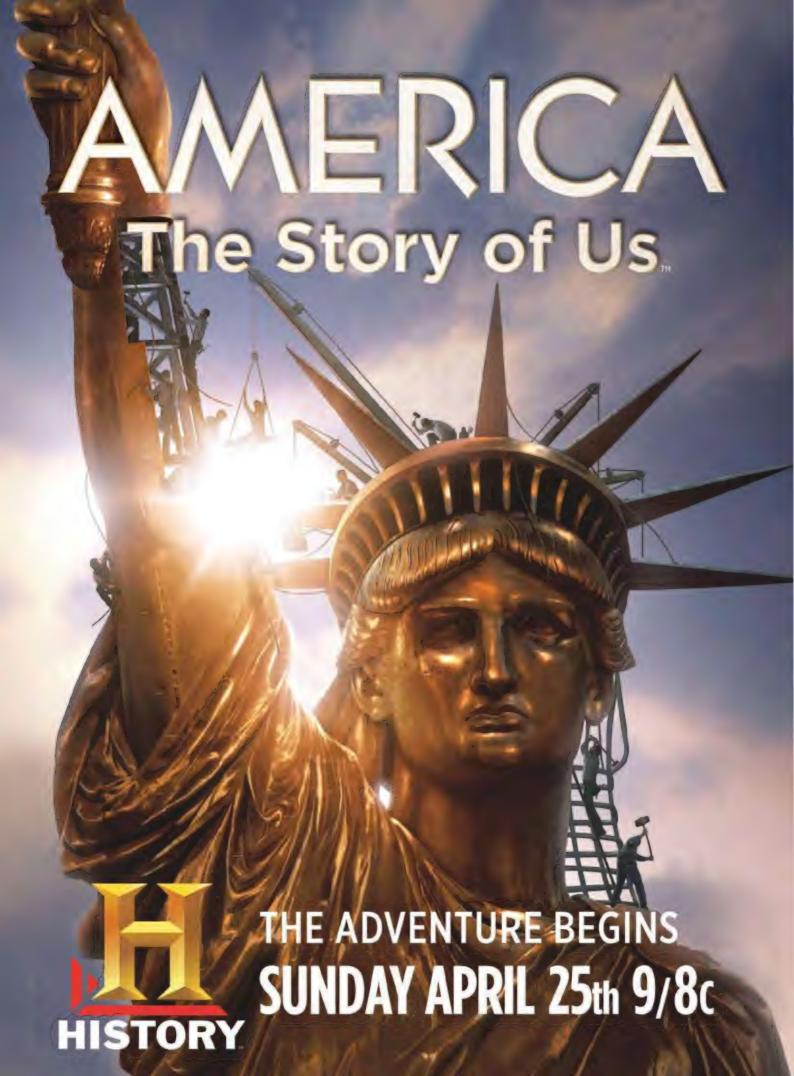
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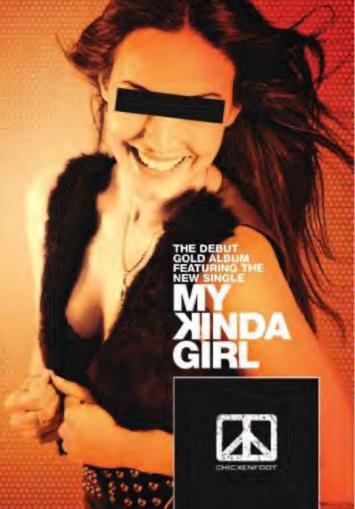
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Editor's Notes

Rock & Roll at the Crossroads

The music business sucks. Radio is worse. They don't make albums like they used to. The Top 40 is all gloss, no guts or glory. And American Idol is hell on Earth, a plague of hams who couldn't hold a gig on a cruise ship. * Some of the above is true; take your pick. But the current state of music is the same as it ever was: There is the good and the bad, and there is always plenty of the former, if you're willing to seek it out. In this issue, we present 40 reasons why this is a great time for music, an exciting era in sound and change. And those are just the ones we had room for.

Popular music is at a crossroads. Conventional record sales - where you hand cash or a credit card over the counter and walk away with the good stuff - are in the toilet, while the collapse of the major-label system (and with it the once-standard dream of a big album contract) has left us with a Wild West of bedroom imprints, digital-merchandising hysteria and a nation of artist-entrepreneurs running their careers on iPhones from the shotgun seat of a tour van. The eccentric flamboyance that made the record industry a nirvana and a laboratory for ingenious misfits and hook-and-riff savants has been replaced by frosty corporate diligence at the top and almost comic austerity everywhere else. The other day, I got an e-mail press release offering review copies of two vinyl LPs - via download.

But those are just crises of technology and commerce. Everything that has ever mattered in rock and pop history, every turning point and life-changing act of creation, happened at a crossroads: Elvis Presley messing around with an Arthur Crudup blues, "That's All Right," during a break at his first Sun Records session, in 1954; Bob Dylan facing the boos with an electric guitar at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival; Nirvana taking punk to the masses, overnight and with a vengeance, on 1991's Nevermind. The choices made at the forks – not just by the singers, song-

writers and bands but everyone on the other end of the music - determine the immediate future and how we look back later, in wonder. And at the dawn of rock's seventh decade (assuming 1951, when Jackie Brenston cut the pioneering fuzz-guitar boogie "Rocket 88," as the year zero), we are spoiled for choice, from the return of U2's gloriously extreme stadium tour (No. 4) and the renaissance of vinyl (No. 35) to the arrival of music services you can access anywhere (No. 14) and the sweet, simple allure of total independence. "I decided I would have to be an industry unto myself, because the industry was in such terrible shape," says producer T Bone Burnett, featured here (No. 36) as the reason classic artists such as John Mellencamp and Willie Nelson are currently making the best records of their lives.

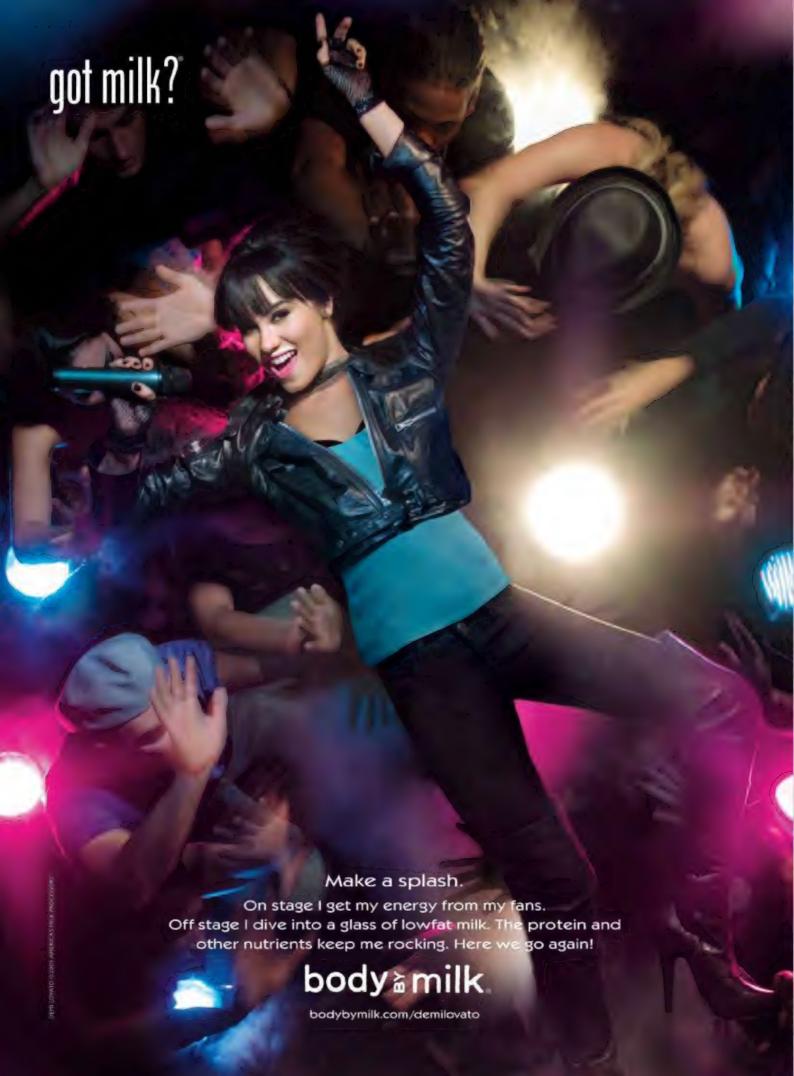
Long after our gadgets stop working, we'll still need music – even if it's just with a single chorus and something to beat on.

Maybe the woes stick out because rock, pop and hip-hop are literally everywhere. They are so embedded in the everyday whirl of modern life and media - films, video games, sports broadcasts, TV commercials, ringtones, political campaigns - that it's easy to forget they were ever opposition music. I thought I'd truly seen the end of days when I heard "Sparks," from the Who's Tommy, playing underneath the Doppler radar on the Weather Channel. But it just made me go back, at top volume, to my CD bootleg of the Who roaring through Tommy live in Amsterdam in 1969. One upside to the Internet: That show is out there somewhere, if you don't have it vet.

But the most exciting thing about music right now is all the stuff that hasn't happened yet, the unintended consequences of those choices we make and the rapidly evolving tools at hand. You think you're hot stuff playing along to Metallica or Nirvana on Guitar Hero? Get a real lesson in transgression - Iggy Pop's famous walk into the audience at the Cincinnati Pop Festival in 1970, smearing peanut butter on his chest - anytime on YouTube. And while I applaud OK Go's knack for viral videos (and their spunk in giving the goodbye finger to their record company), I'm more interested in how a song and a video of genuine immediate sedition will galvanize Wi-Fi America, the way "Ohio," by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, tore across FM and Top 40 radio in 1970, weeks after the student massacre at Kent State University.

But long after our gadgets stop working and my record collection (at least 10,000 LPs, CDs and vinyl singles - I lost count years ago) ends up in landfill, we will still need music and have someone to get it to us, even if it's just with a single chorus and something to beat on for a rhythm. There has never been anything in my world that music couldn't fix or heal. At a recent New York show, the great Southern rockers Drive-By Truckers ended their set with the liberating rage of "Hell No, I Ain't Happy" - and I felt a lot happier when they were done. Music at a crossroads, with me every time I hit a brick wall of my own? I wouldn't have it any other way.

-DAVID FRICKE, Senior Writer



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HOT NEW BANDS

Thom Yorke, Flea Take New York With New Band

Meet the Radiohead leader's rhythm-heavy crew, Atoms for Peace By David Fricke

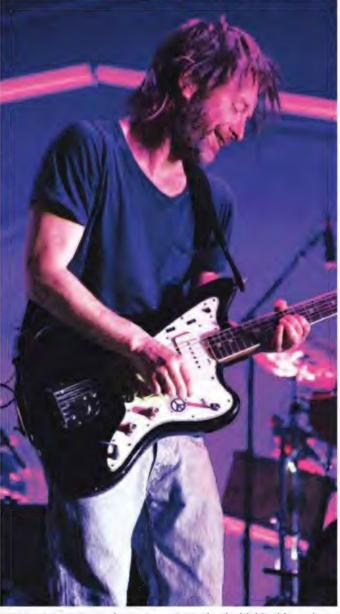
ain't heard before," Radiohead singer Thom Yorke said as he introduced a new song, "A Walk Down the Staircase," during the solo portion of his April 5th concert with side project Atoms for Peace, at New York's Roseland. In fact, the entire show – the first of two at Roseland, and the opening night of a quick U.S. tour that ends April 18th at Coachella

ON THE ROAD

- was a surprise attack, with Yorke, bassist Flea of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich (on keyboards and guitar), drummer Joey Waronker and percussionist Mauro Refosco playing drastic junglefunk rearrangements of the digital-noir songs on Yorke's 2006 album, *The Eraser*.

"I made so many mistakes tonight," Flea confessed, laughing and sporting electric-blue hair backstage after the show. "Thom created these songs on laptops. There are notes in there that are easy to play on a computer – you just hit a key. But to play them live, on an instrument, is a challenge."

Yorke performed another new song on April 5th, "The Daily Mail," and dropped Radiohead [Cont. on 22]



NEW YORKE CITY Yorke onstage at Roseland with his side project, Atoms for Peace. "Thom created these songs on laptops," says bassist Flea. "To play them live, on an instrument, is a challenge."

Amazon, Universal Slash Album Prices

Will lower prices – sometimes way lower – save the music biz? By Steve Knopper

industry's free fall continues, labels, retailers and artists are responding with a radical new plan: slashing album prices. Amazon's download store has taken direct aim at iTunes, selling records by

INDUSTRY

hot artists from Vampire Weekend to Broken Bells at just \$3.99. Meanwhile, Universal, the world's largest record label and home to artists ranging from U2 to Lady Gaga, is slashing prices for all CDs to \$10 or less. "If you've got people who still want to pay for music, keep 'em," says Jim Guerinot, manager of No Doubt and Nine Inch Nails. "[The record industry] is recognizing that the value of CDs has diminished dramatically. And if you want to continue to sell them, this is an appropriate price point."

Universal's Velocity plan, announced March 18th, is a test to see whether pricing CDs between \$6 and \$10 will revive a business that has dropped more than 50 percent [Cont. on 22]

AMAZON

[Cont. from 21] over the past 10 years, according to Nielsen SoundScan. The company recently tested the plan with Trans World Entertainment (which owns F.Y.E. and other outlets) and discovered sales from roughly 6 percent in 2008 to 9 percent last year, according to the NPD Group, while Apple's has dropped by 1.2 percent during the same period. "We want to get a customer excited about shopping for an MP3," says Pete Baltaxe, Amazon's MP3 director, "and a great

THEM CROOKED VULTURES

Months after the Dave Grohl-

led supergroup released its debut, Amazon sold it for \$2.99

for a day in March, It jumped 74

spots up the chart.

tra went on sale a day early in January for \$3.99, the band sold 124,000 copies (60 percent of which were downloads) and landed at Number One. Them Crooked Vultures' debut album, which came out last fall, had a \$2.99 promotion for a day in March; the band sold more than 13,000 copies, surging from Number 110 to Number 36.

Although Apple reps wouldn't comment for this story, industry sources say the company responds aggressively to bands and labels who participate in Amazon's deals. "Apple's feeling the heat," says a source at a major label. "So Apple gets

a little nervous and tries to pull things like, 'You know, if we see this somewhere else, we may not promote the next artist you have.'"

Universal's \$10-CD test, which is supposed to begin in the next couple of months, reduces retailers' wholesale prices from about \$9 to \$7.50 or lower. Other labels, including Sony, have experimented with similar

experimented with similar programs, mostly for catalog. But some in the industry are resistant to the drops. "Who thinks an album by a band that they really love should only be \$2.99?" asks a major-label source, "It's hard to say that represents true market value."

The new deals may be contributing to the pressure from customers - in the form of piracy and fans' ability to cherrypick singles for 99 cents online - to reduce album prices. "Amazon is gaining people who download songs from them instead of iTunes," says Dan Field, manager of Weezer, who sold their 2009 album, Raditude, as part of Amazon's Daily Deal. "We get paid the same amount of money as if it was sold for the regular price. So it's good for our fans, and it's good for us."

The New Low-Price Strategy: Amazon's Bargains Boost Bands



VAMPIRE WEEKEND Amazon put the Brooklyn crew's second album on sale for \$3.99 a day early. It debuted at Number One.

increases of 100 percent. A music-business source with knowledge of the test says, "The research came back, and it said, 'Wow, consumers love this.'"

Amazon began "daily deals" in June 2008, in which an artist sells an album download for as little as \$2.99, often a day earlier than other stores - this year, discs by Spoon, Them Crooked Vultures and Johnny Cash have been part of the promotion. Amazon takes a loss of roughly \$3 on these sales, sources say, because most labels charge \$7 as a standard wholesale price for digital albums. So far, such deals have helped Amazon establish itself as a strong competitor to iTunes.

The retailer's share of digital-music sales has jumped price for an album every day is a great thing for our customers."

\$13.98

Other online retailers have shrunk prices too, but not as dramatically as Amazon – iTunes recently sold older hits such as Justin Bieber's My World and Miran-

"The value of CDs has diminished dramatically," says No Doubt's manager.

da Lambert's Revolution for \$7.99, and Walmart.com sold Michael Bublé's Special Delivery for \$5. Amazon's deals have helped indie bands and new acts crack the Top 40 all year. After Vampire Weekend's Con-

THOM YORKE

[Cont. from 2I] material into both Roseland set lists, including "Everything in Its Right Place" and the B sides "Paperbag Writer" and (on the second night) "Fog." In the latter, Yorke sang, "And the fog comes up from the sewers" – no doubt inspired by a massive underground fire that broke out that afternoon, forcing authorities to close the street outside Roseland, sending ticket holders around to form a long line at the venue's rear entrance.

Until they got to Roseland, Atoms for Peace had played only three gigs, all last fall in Los Angeles. But Yorke definitely considers them a band with a future. At a post-show reception backstage, he revealed that Atoms for Peace rehearsed for several days before the New York shows at Electric Lady Studios, where they worked on riffs and rhythms for potential new songs. And, Flea confirmed, "we've been coming up with some pretty cool shit."

HOT LIST



JACK JOHNSON

"You and Your Heart"

Please, J.J., don't hurt us! The Hawaiian love god gets (relatively) rowdy on this surprisingly nonstrummy, George Harrison-style rocker that arrives just in time for spring bong-cleaning.

BIG BOI

"Shutterbugg"

Big Boi returns with his filthiest-sounding club track in years. Scott Storch (he's back too?) pumps the electro-fuzz bass while the MC spits lines like, "I'm shitting on niggaz and peeing on the seat." Eeewww!

THE NATIONAL

"Blood Buzz Ohio"

The Brooklyn NPRrock kings return with a doomy, surging tune that sounds kind of like Leonard Cohen jamming with INXS. (Come to think of it, those Aussies need a singer - Lenny, you in?)

HOT CHIP

"I Feel Better" video

Boy bands barely exist anymore, but it's still satisfying to see four preening doofuses get assaulted by a laser-breathing space oddity in this hilariously bizarre video.

SHARON JONES

"I Learned the Hard Way"

When she smells perfume on her man's clothes, Jones goes ballistic over a bittersweet Chicago-R&B-style groove laid down by the Dap-Kings. Somewhere, Curtis Mayfield is cranking this on the great jukebox in the sky.





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NO MATTER WHAT GOES DOWN, AXE WILL FIX YOU UP.



Jakob Dylan, Neko Case Team Up on Folky LP

Singer's new solo album features Neko Case, mellow country mood

By Austin Scaggs

met Jakob Dylan on the legendary Rolling Thunder Revue in 1975, when Jakob was just five. Two decades later, Burnett produced Bringing Down the Horse, the breakthrough album for Dylan's band, the Wallflowers.

CHECKING IN

"He's a beacon in my life," says Dylan. "Whatever I'm doing will be better if T Bone's there with me, whether it's music or landscaping."

Dylan's second solo album, Women + Country, reunites him and Burnett, and is another career high point: "There's something special about the record," says Dylan. "I could tell from day one that there was something magic happening."

Dylan, who released his first solo album in 2008, wasn't planning on putting out another so soon. But when he dropped by to see Burnett in the studio last year, he played him a new song, "Nothing but the Whole Wide World," a cinematic slice of Americana that Dylan had actually written for Glen Campbell. "Very few times have I heard a songwriter play



me a song that good," says Burnett. "When I heard that song, all of his influences – the Clash, Elvis Costello – and all of the realities of growing up as Bob Dylan's son seemed to have fallen away. He was just writing true American music."

Dylan returned six weeks later with 15 more songs. Burnett rounded up some of his regular collaborators – pedal steel player Greg Leisz, guitarist Marc Ribot, fiddler David Mansfield – and they recorded the album in five days, giving it Burnett's usual hazy, vintage vibe. "My team aren't only technical but aesthetic," Burnett says. "All I had to do was get everybody in the same room."

But the album didn't feel done yet: "It was clear that we needed a woman on the record," says Burnett. "I thought, 'Let's ask Neko Case – she's the best woman I know.'" Both Case and one of her backup singers, Kelly Hogan, signed on. "We woodshedded like crazy," says Case, who is currently on the road with Dylan. "We wanted to be

prepared. I felt like I studied for my tests and didn't wanna throw up my lunch."

Though the Wallflowers haven't released an album since 2005, Dylan says the band hasn't split. "If we don't work for a year or two, that's not a statement," he explains. "But I can't say that being a bandleader was what I was always into. Doing this now, I don't have to worry about where the beat goes and who's going to shine on what and I don't feel like I have to shout so much anymore."

Malcolm McLaren, Punk Impresario, Dies at 64

Sex Pistols' manager made provocation into an art form By David Browne

ALCOLM MCLAREN, who died of cancer in Switzerland on April 8th at age 64, is best known for conceiving and managing

TRIBUTE

the Sex Pistols. But over the course of his long and willfully perverse career, McLaren – equal parts manager, recording artist, impresario and self-

promoter – took joy in provocation, from the Pistols' 1978 assault on America to mixing hip-hop and minstrel folk on his 1983 hit "Buffalo Gals." In 2008, McLaren said his grandmother instilled this philosophy: "She said, 'To be good is simply boring.' So who wants to be good?"

In the 1970s, McLaren ran the London boutique Sex, where he and his then-girlfriend, fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, specialized in bondage wear. He briefly managed the New York Dolls, but McLaren found his true



calling when he conceived of the idea of a confrontational band, enlisting shop employee Glen Matlock and John Lydon, who would hang around the store. "Malcolm was definitely the Brian Epstein of punk," says Sex Pistols guitarist Steve Jones. "Without him, it wouldn't have happened the way it did."

McLaren's stunts, like having the Pistols play on a boat sailing past the Houses of Parliament, are legendary. "He was in the tradition of the rock & roll carnival huckster, and he was brilliant," says Devo's Jerry Casale, a longtime fan. After the Pistols' implosion, McLaren briefly managed Adam and the Ants, and Bow Wow Wow, and recorded a series of albums that incorporated rap, opera. electronica and even Jeff Beck. But McLaren's unwavering promotion of punk will be his true legacy. "It was wonderful to be able to sell something that was horrible," McLaren said in 2008. "We made ugliness beautiful."

Who is America's Brightest Star?



Jane Curtin



Neil Patrick Harris



Jane Kaczmarek



Isaac Mizrahi



Pat Sajak



Charles Shaughnessy



Michael McKean



Cheech



Harry Shearer

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Eagles Hit Hollywood, Stadiums in 2010

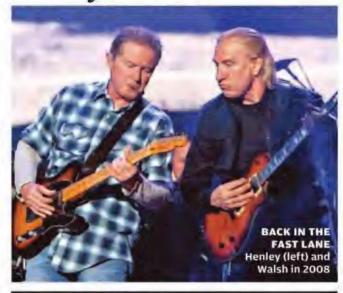
Band's smash 'Long Road' tour rolls on with Keith Urban, Dixie Chicks By Austin Scaggs

THER GROSSING MORE than \$130 million over the course of 103 shows, the Eagles are beefing up their two-year Long Road Out of Eden tour by hitting eight stadiums in June. They'll be bringing along two of country's hottest acts, Keith Urban

TOUR PREVIEW

and the Dixie Chicks, who are touring for the first time since 2006. "When the Eagles call, you do whatever they say," says singer Martie Maguire. The Eagles are consistently one of rock's biggest touring acts, but by adding Urban and the Dixie Chicks, the band has assembled one of the summer's strongest bills. "We share musical roots with these other groups," says Eagles frontman Don Henley. "Plus, they'll help us fill stadiums in this stillshaky economy."

Adds Alex Hodges, CEO of Los Angeles promoter Nederlander Concerts, "I think it's an amazing combination, and the music all fits. You're going



"We will not be playing any brand-new things," says Henley. "That never works."

to get two to three generations of cross-pollinated fans."

But before they hit stadiums this summer, the Eagles – who also include singer Glenn Frey, guitarist Joe Walsh and bassist Timothy B. Schmit – will play their first shows at the Hollywood Bowl in mid-April, a three-night stand that will be a homecoming celebration for the quintessential Los Angeles band. "We'll keep things upbeat," says Henley. "But these shows will have an underlying poignancy for me and Glenn because we lived just a block away from the Bowl when we started the band decades ago. Add to that the possibility that these may be our last L.A. shows, and the whole thing becomes somewhat bittersweet."

The 2010 leg will feature the same superpolished shows the group is known for, mixing cuts from its smash 2007 comeback record, *Long Road Out of Eden*, with plenty of classics. "We will not be playing any brand-new things," says Henley. "Despite what the critics think, that never works."

Henley, who will turn 63 in July, has settled into his role as a family man with wife Sharon and their three young kids in Dallas. "We live a life here that is gratifyingly normal," he says. He's also plotting the next phase of his solo career. "I have three different albums in my head," he says. "A country-bluegrass-blues record, a Sixties-style-soul disc and one of contemporary covers."

In the meantime, Henley is busy capitalizing on the band's resurgence: "I want to complete a global circuit," says the singer, who hopes to tour in Asia next. He adds that band relations are relatively copacetic. "Things are peaceful, but we haven't seen each other since New Year's Eve," Henley jokes. "There are rarely flare-ups, but I have to bite my tongue fairly often. Eventually, I'm either going to have to get a tongue transplant or quit the band."

ALSO ON THE ROAD



Robert Plant July 13th-July 31st

Tickets: \$20-\$150

Robert Plant is not releasing his next record until the fall, but he's hitting the road this summer to preview his rootsy follow-up to 2007's Raising Sand, with the same musicians who play on the new LP. including country singer Patty Griffin and guitarist Buddy Miller. The shows will include tracks from the new record, selections from the new record, obscure blues and country covers, Plant solo material and Led Zeppelin cuts

redone in an Americana style.
"It's going to be a pretty eclectic
mix, and it rocks pretty good,"
says Miller.

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

May 6th-August 27th Openers: CSN, My Morning Jacket, Joe Cocker, Drive-By Truckers, ZZ Top, Buddy Guy Tickets: \$35-\$125

Tom Petty and the

Heartbreakers don't skimp on the hits when they go on the road, but this summer's tour will shake up the set list with songs from the band's guitar-heavy new album, Mojo. Petty and Co. are even considering devoting a section of the show to the LP, which was recorded live in the studio. "To have all of this in your pocket and not use it would be a sin," says Petty. "It's too tempting to play." Adds guitarist Mike Campbell, "We want to give

everybody both worlds - something they're familiar with and maybe an experience that will be on a higher plane as well."

Paramore

July 23rd-September 19th Opener: Tegan and Sara Tickets: \$21-\$39

"This is our biggest U.S. tour, so we have big-ass aspirations." says Paramore singer Hayley Williams, whose pop-punk foursome will headline the ninth annual Honda Civic Tour. The band will break out careerspanning tunes on the 29-date



trek, which will hit arenas and sheds. "We're expanding our songs and trying to make them exciting," says Williams. "But I'm not giving anything away. I'm still thinking about what I'm going to wear."

Neil Young

May 18th-June 7th Opener: Bert Jansch Tickets: \$51-\$245

On his 14-date solo acoustic U.S. tour, Neil Young will perform songs from throughout his catalog and unveil new, as-yetunrecorded tunes. Opening the gigs is British folk legend Bert Jansch, of whom Young is a longtime fan - he even claims he inadvertently stole the melody of his tune "Ambulance Blues" from Jansch's 1965 instrumental "Needle of Death," "Neil shouldn't feel guilty," says Jansch. "If the chance arises," he adds, "I'd like to perform 'Rockin' in the Free World' with him."



The 16-year-old sensation on his summer shows, first guitar and new ride

By Austin Scaggs

MA SPAN OF JUST FOUR months, Justin Bieber has sold more than 1 million copies of his debut EP, caused a riot at a mall on Long Island, scored a Number One album and become Conan O'Brien's favorite punch line – and he just turned 16. "I treated myself to a Range Rover," says

Q&A

Bieber, playing pool in his record label's offices in Manhattan. The teen-pop sensation will continue to cause hysteria this summer, on his first headlining tour, which begins June 23rd. "There will be a lot of magic tricks," says Bieber of the arena show. "All of a sudden, I'll just appear out of the blue. And I want booms and stuff. I love explosions."

You claim to have started playing drums at age two. Where and how?

I started playing at church. We didn't have a lot of money, so people brought over instruments from church, and those would be my toys. Eventually, my mom bought me a drum kit and I took a few lessons.

And your mom introduced you to the music you love? Yeah, she played a lot of Boyz II Men. Like "On Bended Knee," "End of the Road." And Michael Jackson's Bad - they are my two main influences. I also like what's-her-name: [Sings] "Don't you know, we're talkin' 'bout a revolution." Tracy Chapman! I was kind of a bedroom singer. I didn't sing in public till I was 12. My mom knew I could sing, though. We'd watch American Idol, and I'd be like. "I could make that show." But I was too young to try out.

How did you get your first guitar?

It was some tiny Walmart guitar. I didn't know what I was doing. But my mom had friends that would come over to the



"My mom and I went to Disneyland with the money I made busking."

house, and they'd show me a few chords. "Smoke on the Water" was the first song I learned, but I couldn't even do power chords or barre chords, because my fingers weren't strong enough. My dad taught me how to play "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," by Bob Dylan, and [Supertramp's] "Give a Little Bit." He got me into classic rock.

You used to busk on the street. What was in your repertoire?

I sang "I'll Be," by Edwin Mc-Cain; "You and Me," by Lifehouse; "U Got It Bad," by Usher; and "Cry Me a River." I'd make \$200 a day. My mom and I went on vacation to Disneyland with the money I made.

How many concerts have you been to?

Not a lot. We could never really afford it. I saw Simple Plan -

I don't know if you know who they are – and another Canadian band, Tragically Hip.

Is your voice changing all the time?

Yeah. It cracks, like every teenage boy. I'm dealing with it. I have the best vocal coach in the country, Miss Jan Smith. Even some of the notes I hit on [new single] "Baby," I can't hit anymore. We have to lower the key when I sing it live.

Is it annoying when girls shriek while you're trying to sing?

I wear in-ear monitors so I can always hear myself sing. The other day, though, I was playing in front of 75,000 people at the Texas rodeo. My friends were there, and I asked them, "Did I do good?" They were like, "I have no idea – all we heard was screaming."

IN THE NEWS

Jane's Addiction Adds McKagan

After months of rumors. Jane's Addiction announced that former Guns n' Roses bassist Duff McKagan has joined the band. "We're from the same musical time, the same town, the same era," says guitarist Dave Navarro. "It was a natural fit," (Original bassist Eric Avery quit the band at the end of its recent reunion tour.) For now, Jane's are spending most of their time jamming at their L.A. rehearsal space. "Our main goal is writing new music, so that's what 97 percent of our time is geared toward," says McKagan. "But to play songs like 'Been Caught Stealing' is pretty fucking kick-ass." The group is working on its first album since 2003 and plans to launch a tour in 2011.

Linkin Park Debut Cut in iPhone App

To give fans a taste of their upcoming album, Linkin Park came up with a high-tech marketing scheme: hiding a new track, "Blackbirds," in an iPhone app. This spring. the band will unveil 8-Bit Rebellion, a game that, when beaten, unlocks the Rick Rubin-produced cut. The game also features remixes of Linkin Park hits in the style of old-school video-game music. The vibe takes me back to junior high," says vocalist Mike Shinoda, who adds that the group is working on a new LP for later this year. "We've been trying to loosen up and give fans what they want," he says. "Which is new music more often."

Doors Film Boasts Rare Footage

Director Tom DiCillo's new documentary about the Doors, When You're Strange, is nothing like Oliver Stone's 1991 biopic. "That wasn't about the Doors," says DiCillo. "It was about made-up characters. Ten seconds of the real [Jim] Morrison blows that out of the water." DiCillo's Johnny Depp-narrated film (playing now in major cities, opening elsewhere this spring) is composed entirely of archival footage - including a rare clip from a movie Morrison made in 1969. "We're such geezers - who wants to see us?" says Doors drummer John Densmore, "This way you get more Jim - you see his humor, his vulnerability."

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Paper Tongues Update Rap Rock With Electro Grooves

North Carolina crew lands Randy Jackson as a manager, scores radio hit By Nicole Frehsée

Before ASWAN NORTH became the frontman of the Charlotte, North Carolina, seven-piece rock band Paper Tongues, he pursued another career: drug deal-

BREAKING

ing. "I was selling weed, and I was being taught how to sell dope," recalls the 29-year-old North. "But I realized I wasn't built for it. I just couldn't turn someone into a crackhead."

Now, North and his crew have American Idol judge Randy Jackson for a manager and a major-label album, Paper Tongues. The group also has a hit single - the surging, Linkin Park-style rap-rock anthem "Ride to California" - blowing up on rock radio. "They've embraced the dimensions of the 'new' rock - meaning they're a rock band but with a hip-hop element," says Jackson, who signed on after North approached him in a Los Angeles restaurant. "I predict that in five years, they'll be one of our next big arena bands."

Paper Tongues - who also include guitarists Devin Forbes and Joey Signa, keyboardists Cody Blackler and Clayton Simon, drummer Jordan Hardee and bassist Danny Santell formed in 2007, when they met on a street corner in Charlotte where musicians would congregate for jam sessions on Saturday nights. "We all come from such different musical backgrounds," says the fast-talking North, whose drill-sergeant dad banned him from listening to anything but country music as a kid. (He'd sneak Grandmaster Flash and Kool and the Gang tapes into his Walkman.) "I like to say we're a combination of the Roots and Journey."

When it came time to write the album, North simply drew on his past. "I've had so many freaking bizarre life experiences," says the mixed-race singer (his father is Egyptian, his mother is white), who was taken away from his birth mother by social services at age two, was adopted by another couple and has been arrested "a few times" for drug possession. "I want to flip my experiences and turn them into something positive."

North spun his rags-toriches story into "Ride to California," which chronicles his actual journey from Charlotte to Los Angeles to meet Nelly Furtado producer Brian West, who ended up working on most of the band's album. (West requested a sit-down with North after hearing one of the band's demos on MySpace.) "I had no money to get there, so I started knocking on neighbors' doors," North recalls. "One couple was so entertained that they gave me \$300."

"We wouldn't be where we are today if Aswan wasn't so audacious," says Forbes. To win over Jackson, North interrupted his meal. "I sat down next to him, slid his plate over and gave him a piece of paper with my MySpace page and phone number on it," says North. "He called me two hours later and said, 'Come meet with me tomorrow.'"

Despite the band's Holly-wood fairy tale, the guys - who are on tour throughout the summer - still reside in Charlotte. "We're Southern boys, through and through," says North. Adds Forbes, "Every tour we go on, the first stop is Walmart. We gotta buy our white bread and our cold cuts."

WHAT'S UP WITH...

Nicki Minaj

Raunchy Queens native is Lil Wayne's favorite female rapper

WHO The first female MC to catch serious buzz since Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown, Nicki Minaj is a cleavage-baring, foulmouthed Queens rapper who spits lines like "Got that supersoaker pussy ... tighter than a choker." Though Minaj hasn't released an album yet, Lil Wayne signed her to his Young Money label, and she's made spotlight-stealing cameos on hits by Robin Thicke, Mariah Carey and Usher, "I'm the voice of lots of girls - raunchy ones and preppy ones," says the 25-yearold, who peppers her rhymes with different accents, from Valley girl to upper-crust British. "I think there's an English girl named Hermione who lives inside of me," she adds. "I can't explain it."

BACKSTORY The Trinidadborn Minaj (real name: Onika Maraj) started rapping in junior high, when she'd test her rhymes on neighborhood



dudes. "I would rap about how cute and tough I was." she recalls, "I thought the guys were laughing because they liked it. Then I realized that I was the joke." She studied acting at New York's LaGuardia high school (the performing-arts school immortalized in Fame) and was discovered by Weezy after he saw her freestyling on a DVD. "He treats me like a little sister," says Minaj. "If I have on something sexy, he gets all protective, like, 'What the hell are you wearing?'

WHAT'S NEXT Minaj's debut single, the minimalist, tribalinfluenced "Massive Attack," is out now, and her as-yetuntitled first album is slated for release in the fall.



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NORWEGIAN INDIE FOLK ROCKER SONDRE LERCHE IS THE LATEST RARE FIND ON NEW YORK CITY'S MUSIC SCENE

A blend of '50s jazz, '80s new wave, and yes, even a little '70s Brazilian psych-folk, defines Sondre's unique sound. The 27-year-old recently moved to New York City with his wife, actress Mona Lerche. Here, an intimate look at Norway's favorite son and America's new rare find.

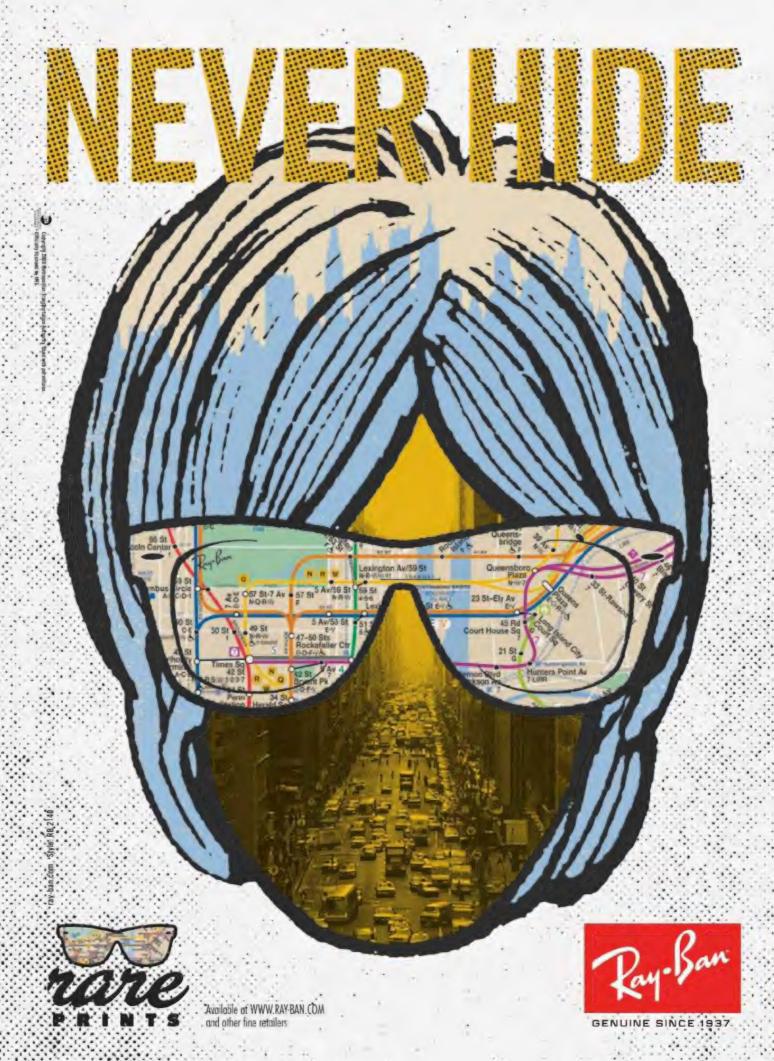
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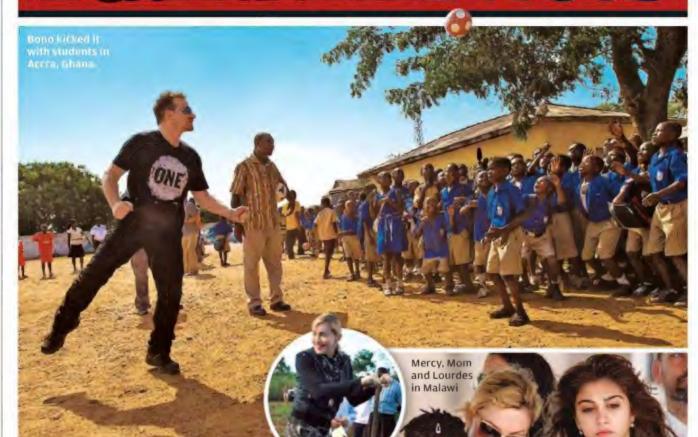
MINDIE DUET

Ray-Ban® Rare Prints Special Series Wayfarer® Subway sport a subway map of Sondre's newly adopted city.





Random Notes



Bono to the Rescue

The globe's biggest superstar-activists descended on Africa - Bono brought his ONE Campaign to Ghana, where the U2 frontman showed off the soccer skills that earned him the nickname "the Mick With the Kick." Meanwhile, in Malawi, Madonna and her multiculti clan broke ground on a school for girls. Classes include "Kabbalah for Kids," "Cone-Bra Maintenance" and "The Benefits of a British Accent."







The Sox-Yankees season opener drew a slew of s to Fenway Park. Even W

Coaster Dr. Dre was in th house - during BP he r

his first hit in year

Chelsea

Steven Tyler belted "God Bless America," with

harmony from daughter/clone

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Love in Vein

Cult hit 'The Vampire Diaries' is the ultimate teen girl's fantasy: The immortal lost boy rescuing his love from suburbia By Rob Sheffield

VERY TEENAGE GIRL should have a vampire boyfriend - and by now, it seems like every teenage girl does. The groundbreaking genius of The Vampire Diaries is to create a teen-girl world where boys who aren't vampires don't even exist. For this crew,

The Vampire Diaries

Thursdays, 8 p.m., the CW

there's no Twilight debate over whether humans and vampires belong in the same bed. None of the Vampire Diaries girls would waste time pondering the pros and cons of dating the undead versus flesh-and-blood boys. No, the only romantic dilemma for these young ladies is what kind of vampire to date.

It's high school vampire love with the soapy romance of Twilight but also the sassy wit of Buffy. The premise is the same old story: Even though these fanged studs can travel anywhere they like in time or space, all they crave is an ordinary all-American girl stuck in a nowhere town. Breaking into tombs, going to school dances, time-traveling back to the Civil War, sensitive brooding set to a Surfer Blood song - it's all in a typical day for these kids.

It wasn't that long ago that Dracula fantasies were a fetish for oldsters, something a jaded, hard-drinking Seventies mom would get from a Frank Langella movie or an Anne Rice novel. But ever since the goth explosion of the Eighties, the vampire boyfriend has been rising on the teen charts. He's become the only male who can truly understand the suburban girl: the lost boy with tweezed brows, immaculate pores and luxuriantly manscaped expressions of despair.

The Vampire Diaries chronicles the plasma-spattering love life of Elena (Nina Dobrev), a sweet goth chick going to high school in the rural town of (that's right) Mystic Falls, Virginia, And that's as close as this show ever gets to subtlety, which is a smart move, because when it comes to vampire lust, subtlety is a complete waste of time.

Elena lives with her brother, Jeremy (Steven R. McQueen - yes, that Steve McQueen's grandson), after their parents are killed in a car crash. Like any self-respecting high school girl, Elena has to choose be-

tween two vampires, a good one (he gives her a protective necklace of vervain) and a bad one (you just know he'll bite her neck the first chance he gets). And they're brothers. Stefan (Robert Pattinson look-alike Paul Wesley), the nice one, does not drink human blood. But Damon (Rob Lowe lookalike Ian Somerhalder), his steamier older brother, has no qualms. When history teach-

THE WATCH LIST

The Price of Beauty Mondays, 10 p.m., VH1

Welcome back to basic cable. Jessica Simpson! While we all pray for a Billy Corgan remake of Newlyweds, Jess travels the world as a roving reporter. comparing an elephant to a "giant scrotum." Come back, Tara Reid - all is forgiven.

The Tudors

Sundays, 9 p.m., Showtime The best-looking, most infrequently dressed, most morally appalling cast of royals is back for a final season of 16th-century soft-core. Jonathan Rhys Meyers is exquisitely slimy, playing Henry VIII as a cross between James Bond and Morrissey.

er Mr. Tanner gets annoying, Damon just rips out his throat. (Naturally, the school board replaces him with a teacher who doubles as a professional vampire killer.)

The Vampire Diaries is amazingly unconflicted about love and sex. Elena doesn't agonize over the pros and cons of fang-banging - she just picks the one she likes best (Stefan) and takes him to bed. So is it true love for Stefan and Elena? Or is he just into her because she looks exactly like the vamp who made him back in 1864? Will he leave her for a centuries-older woman? How long can she resist her attraction to Damon even if he did drink her brother's girlfriend's blood? And do you even need to be told that her best friend is a witch?

We're surrounded by batporn fantasies these days, but Vampire Diaries is the one that feels most authentic, because it's the most suburban, the most adolescent, the most ordinary. It would kill the fantasy if there were anything glamorous about Elena. (That's why Twilight was so great, when Kristen Stewart was just some mousy girl in a flannel shirt, and New Moon sucked, when Kristen Stewart was a movie star.) The whole point of the myth is that Dracula plucks this girl from nowhere and makes her a star. And so the everyday American bleakness of Mystic Falls is what makes Vampire Diaries a real date with danger.

All these stories plug into a classic female fantasy: The heroines are the smart, lonely girls who think ordinary straight guys are meathead idiots. So vampire movies are to girls what teen-sex comedies are to guys - the dream of getting the unattainable. Maybe the girl can never fully possess her undead suitor, but that's the point: The thrill of the chase never ends. The boy will be in a constant state of feverish pursuit - since he can never get you, his attention will never wane, and neither will the drama. Elena can't share her mortal existence with either Damon or Stefan - so her vampire diary never reaches the final page.

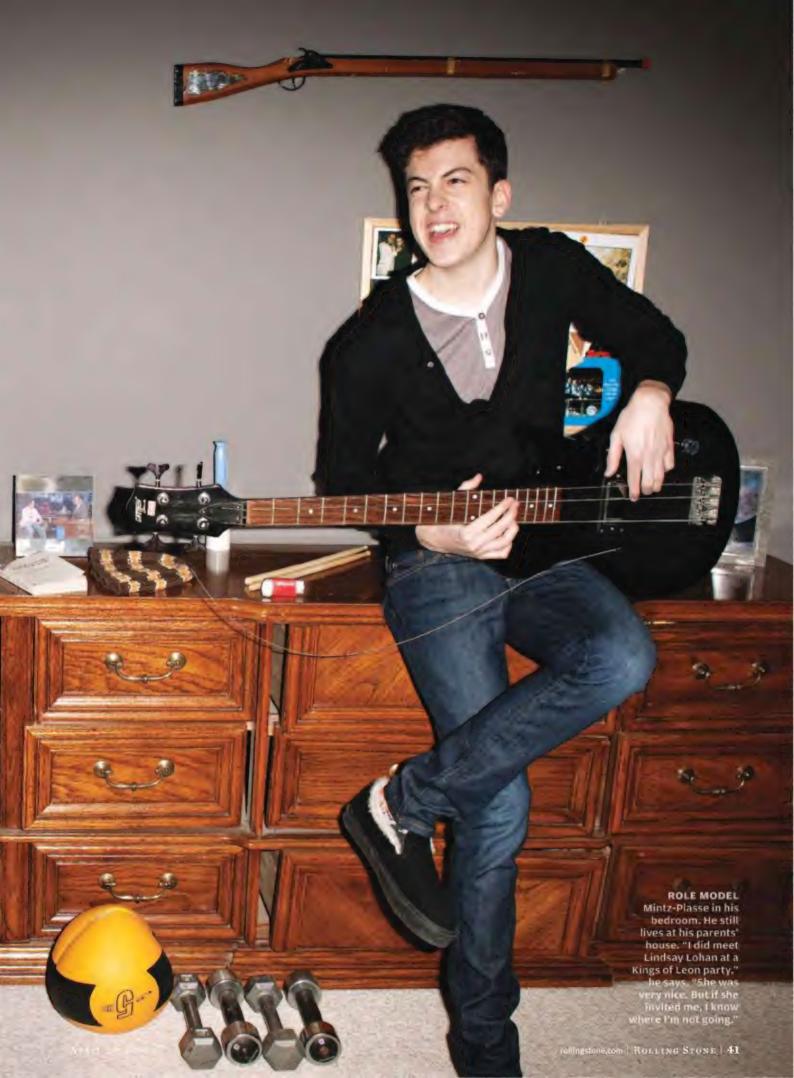






out this month - Mintz-Plasse still lives in the humble one-story suburban L.A. home where he grew up with his mailman dad and schoolcounselor mom. Mintz-Plasse started acting in school plays at age six but had never been to an audition before Superbad. Though he has found the character hard to shake and worries about typechildhood friends. Still, at a college party he went to recently, he got scared off by the spoils of fame: "This girl comes up to me and says, I will suck your dick right now,' and I'm like, 'That's OK, I gotta go. I don't even know your name.' And I was thinking, 'My God, what diseases does she have on her mouth?' It was very stressful." JENNY ELISCU

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS MCPHERSON





The Watchdog

Elizabeth Warren may be the only person in Washington who stands between us and Wall Street's next meltdown

* By Tim Dickinson *

TH THE STOCK MARKET on a roll and employment beginning to pick up, it's easy to think that the economy has finally turned the corner. Leading bankers and politicians assure us that the financial crisis is behind us - and the reckless gambles that cratered the global economy will never be repeated. But Elizabeth Warren, Washington's top financial watchdog, has news for you. The economy may be growing at long last - but unless Congress gets serious about reforming our financial system, we're doomed to repeat a catastrophic cycle of boom, bust and bailouts. "We have one slim chance, right now," says Warren, "to put the too-big-to-fail genie back in the bottle."

If Congress can deliver on President Obama's promise of financial reform, Warren says, it can create the conditions needed for 50 years of economic growth and shared prosperity – just as the Depression-era reformers did in the 1930s. But if lawmakers simply paper over the crisis, she warns, Wall Street's rash bets will

continue to be rewarded – and the next crisis will be far worse. "It will be TARP 2.0," Warren says, "and our economy will never be the same."

A professor of law at Harvard, Warren has become the folk hero of the bailout era. Appointed to oversee the \$700 billion TARP bailout, she's the one official in Washington who can be counted on to champion the interests of the middle class. As chair of the Congressional Oversight Panel - the aptly named COP - Warren exposed Hank Paulson's big lie: The initial round of TARP money was a \$78 billion giveaway to Wall Street's most reckless banks, not, as Bush's treasury secretary claimed, a fair exchange of cash for equity. In a true display of bipartisanship, Warren has also kept the heat on the Obama administration, grilling senior officials over their sweetheart treatment of AIG. (For a six-minute primer in Warren's prosecutorial prowess, search YouTube for "Timmy Geithner squirm.")

In the process, Warren has transformed her obscure post into a bully pulpit. As the intellectual architect of the proposed Consumer Financial Protection Agency, she has waged a relentless media campaign to ensure that the government safeguards borrowers from toxic financial products the same way the FDA protects patients from toxic drugs. Warren's critics have tried to paint her as a self-righteous, bankhating, ivory-tower elitist. Sen. Richard Shelby, a Republican from Alabama, calls the consumer agency "the nanny state at its worst," and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has launched an all-out campaign to "Stop the CFPA," claiming that it "would make a bad economy even worse."

If Warren has all the right enemies, she has also cultivated powerful friends. At the White House, she speaks directly to presidential wingman David Axelrod, and Obama himself has made the case for her agency on *The Tonight Show*. Warren strategized with Rep. Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, to steer the CFPA to passage in the House. "She has a great sense of how to operate politically," Frank says. And in the Senate, where debate on reform is just

heating up, Majority Whip Dick Durbin calls Warren his "go-to person."

But Warren isn't taking any chances. "She's carried this fight way beyond Washington to the American people," says Nobel Prize-winning economist Joe Stiglitz, who lauds Warren as a one-woman bulwark against the bank lobby. "So many of our politicians have failed us – and she has filled the gap."

arren's look may be librarian chic - rimless glasses, bobbed hair parted down the middle and tucked primly behind her ears - but her style is more aw-shucks Midwestern than populist fireball. She adheres strictly to the Charles Schulz book of cursing - "Good grief!" and "Holy guacamole!" - delivered without a hint of irony. When we meet at a cafe near the White House, she mentions in passing that she bakes a mean peach cobbler - a recipe she inherited, no joke, from her Aunt Bee.

Warren's unwavering defense of the middle class stems from her own experience - first as a child in Oklahoma, then as a professor researching bankruptcy law. Her parents grew up during the Dust Bowl, and by the time Warren was born in 1949, "they were beaten down financially." Fleeced by a business partner, her father was forced into a series of tough, dead-end jobs. Traveling salesman. Maintenance man. He suffered a heart attack. They lost the family car. At age 16, Warren managed to earn a full-ride scholarship to George Washington University. Working as a summer associate on Wall Street, she saved enough money to get her teeth straightened. But while her own hard work paid off, her family continued to struggle. "My dad, my brothers, my mother - they're good people who said, 'I'll do my best. I'll get out there, and I'll make this work.' But they're also living proof that it's hard."

Given her own bootstrap ethic, Warren began her academic career deeply skeptical of those she saw as taking the easy way out. As a young law professor in Texas in the early 1980s, she embarked on a research project on bankruptcy expecting to "expose deadbeats - people who take advantage of a too-generous legal system." But the data and the case files told a much different story. Warren discovered that most Americans who file for bankruptcy are hardworking folks who play by the rules - and wind up losing, through no fault of their own. They get sick. Their marriages hit the rocks. Their parents need nursing care. "These are my people," she says. "That, for me, was transformative.

The lesson was reinforced a decade later when Citibank invited Warren to propose ways to minimize its losses from cardholders in financial trouble. Warren had simple advice: When borrowers show signs of distress – missed payments and plunging credit scores – cut them off from new lines of credit. But after she finished her presentation, a banker at the back of the room bluntly rejected her suggestion. "We have no interest in cutting back on our lending to these people," he told Warren. "They are the ones who provide most of our profits."

That moment, Warren says, "began to change my whole vision of consumer finance." She came to see Wall Street banks as predators, offering too-easy credit and too-complex contracts designed to "trick and trap" borrowers into recurring fees and exploding interest rates. "If people ended up in bankruptcy," she realized, "it didn't matter for the profit model."

Today, says Warren, the fortunes of Wall Street and the fortunes of Main Street have become disastrously oppositional. Despite profiting from taxpayer bailouts, Wall Street has only made life more miserable for those scraping by in what she calls the "real economy." Banks are refus-

To make sense of what needs to happen, Warren distilled for ROLLING STONE the three-part litmus test she uses to determine whether a proposed reform will actually protect consumers and ensure that we're rebuilding the economy on a solid foundation rather than erecting another house of cards. Think of them as Warren's Rules for Reform:

RULE ONE

GIVE THE LITTLE GUY A FIGHTING CHANCE

FOR WARREN, A STRONG, INDEPENdent consumer-protection agency is at the heart of any meaningful financial reform. If a cholesterol medicine carried a one-in-five risk of causing a heart attack, it would never get approval from the FDA. But a subprime mortgage that carries the same risk of ending in foreclosure, she points out, can be sold without any warning label. Such predatory products – running the gamut from payday loans to reverse mortgages – juice corpo-

Citibank told Warren it planned to keep on lending to distressed consumers: "They provide most of our profits."

ing to modify mortgages for the hardstrapped homeowners they deceived, and now they're even bilking credit-worthy borrowers with arbitrary interest-rate hikes. Worse, Warren says, bankers like Jamie Dimon of JP Morgan Chase have testified before Congress that we should expect cycles of boom and bust to recur every five to seven years. "What pisses me off - I didn't say that - what makes me so angry is that the financial collapse was not a natural phenomenon like a hurricane or a drought," she says. "It was the consequence of a series of deliberate regulatory choices. That Jamie Dimon has figured out how to make a profit off of that may make him willing to tolerate booms and busts but for the rest of us, the consequences are catastrophic."

VEN WITH WARREN'S PLAINspokenness, the battle over
financial reform involves a
host of complex and confusing
options. Should Congress break up big
banks? Regulate toxic deals like creditdefault swaps? Expand the power of the
Federal Reserve? Warren is well aware
that politicians from both parties, whatever their differences, are eager to vote for
a bill that they can tout as having reined
in Wall Street. "They're going to call this
reform, no matter what," she says. The
question is: Will it do any good?

rate profits by exploiting consumers who play by the rules, only to discover that the bank can change their interest rate without warning.

Warren's relentless focus on consumer protection has earned her honest criticism on Capitol Hill, even from her admirers, Sen. Ted Kaufman, a Democrat from Delaware, worries that the contentious debate over the CFPA will distract Congress from the larger question of how to rein in big banks. "If we don't do something about too-big-to-fail and we go through a crisis like this again," he says, "the cost to consumers is going to be extraordinary – even if we have a consumer-protection agency."

But Warren believes such criticism misses the point: Creating a safe and transparent marketplace for borrowers will ultimately protect Wall Street and the entire economy. The agency would have the power to police the kind of predatory lending - subprime mortgages being the key example - that not only drove individual borrowers into ruin, but became "toxic assets" as they were sliced, diced and securitized by banks looking for lucrative new instruments. "This whole economy failed one bad mortgage at a time," Warren says. "The raw material that fed into the crisis was bad consumer financial products. If nobody can sell mortgage-backed securities based on trillions of dollars of

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unpayable instruments, there's a lot less risk in the overall system."

As Warren envisions it, the CFPA would streamline government by consolidating regulatory authority now spread among seven bureaucracies - including the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which is run by a former bank lobbyist. The new agency would police everything from car loans to home mortgages, ensuring that borrowers understand the costs and risks of a financial product before signing on the bottom line. In 1980, Warren points out, the average credit-card agreement fit on a single page. Today, it is more than 30 pages of incomprehensible legalese. "The maze of fine print and undisclosed practices," she says, makes signing up for a Visa card "like putting your head in a lion's mouth and hoping he isn't hungry." The CFPA would make choosing a credit card or mortgage a straightforward decision, based on the best available terms. Informed speculators would still be able to flip a house, but the agency would stop predatory lenders from refinancing a grandmother out of her home with a defective loan.

Much of the debate surrounding the agency has centered on where it should be housed. Warren is agnostic about location, as long as the agency hews to a four-point checklist: Is the agency headed by a presidential appointee? Does it have independent budget authority so it can't be zeroed out by a hostile Congress? Can it make and enforce its own rules? And does its scope cover the full range of financial products?

In the end, Warren is confident that she can hold the line on these criteria to ensure that the new agency doesn't degenerate into a regulatory mush. "We'll have something strong here," she vows, "or we'll have nothing at all."

RULE TWO

MAKE BANKERS PAY FOR THEIR MISTAKES

AS A BANKRUPTCY LAWYER, WARREN believes that regulatory reform must put the possibility of failure back on the table for America's biggest banks.

Americans tend to think of Too Big to Fail in terms of the billions of dollars it cost us in TARP funds and Federal Reserve guarantees. But Warren insists that the problem is best understood as a permanent form of federal insurance – one extended only to the world's richest and riskiest financial institutions, and cy that enables regulators to pull the plug on failing banks before they take down the entire economy. Although she believes all three will probably need to be used in concert, Warren views the third element as the linchpin. "I hope it is never necessary to kill off one of these companies, because that's a scary moment," she says. "But that's the point of law. Bankruptcy is there to have a set of rules in place for the potentially catastrophic moment."

Warren believes there are two reforms necessary to make bankruptcy work for massive, interconnected financial firms. First, make the process as painful as possible for those responsible. "The bankers

Rather than sparking a ban on accounting tricks, Enron offered Wall Street a "giant how-to manual" for gaming the system.

one that produces ongoing hidden costs. In March, for example, the rating agency Moody's disclosed that it has upgraded Citi's debt solely because it believes the government will step in to prevent default. How much does the government charge for that guarantee? "Zero. Zip. Nada," says Warren. "They paid not a penny for an insurance policy that's worth billions." That gives big banks an advantage over smaller competitors, fueling consolidation and encouraging risk.

As Warren sees it, there are three basic strategies available for ending the era of Too Big to Fail. Break up the banks. Prohibit them from engaging in too-risky behaviors, such as running their own hedge funds with federally insured deposits. Or create a credible form of bankrupt-

have to know that they'll go down with the ship," she says. "Under TARP, the executives got to keep their jobs and earn bigger and fatter bonuses than ever before." Wall Street needs to know, she says, that if their institutions falter, top management will get sacked, shareholders will be wiped out, and creditors will get back pennies on the dollar. "It has to be tough enough so that the Goldman Sachs of the future will want to manage themselves – no matter what – to avoid bankruptcy."

The second key, Warren says, is to close the loophole that Wall Street lob-byists carved out in 2005, when Congress overhauled the nation's bankruptcy laws. Before the latest crisis, Chapter II bankruptcy was a tool powerful enough to wind down even massive, interconnected



institutions like Enron. But the loophole introduced in 2005 allowed the holders of derivative contracts to ignore the freeze on a bankrupt company's assets. The collapse of Lehman Brothers brought the entire economy to its knees, says Warren, because derivatives holders were allowed by law to make a run on the bank, hollowing out Lehman's carcass while the firm's other creditors were frozen out. The resulting panic sparked a market-wide contagion, which led to TARP. If financial reform doesn't shut down this derivatives loophole. Warren warns. "it's not real."

The tricky part of big-bank bankruptcy, Warren knows, is that taxpayer money may have to be made available to "fund runways for the bad landings." That requires Congress to perform a balancing act: It needs to hold banks accountable for their mistakes while injecting enough money into the system to stop a cascade of failures. "If they don't find a way to calm the creditors, then the next Uncle Hank won't use the bankruptcy authority," says Warren. "Instead, he will do a wholesale bailout – which is TARP 2.0."

RULE THREE

STOP COOKING THE BOOKS

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT WARREN'S first two rules have a significant chance of becoming law. The House has already passed a version of the CFPA. And the bill under consideration in the Senate grapples seriously with bankruptcy authority – though Warren cautions that "the pieces are not all quite there yet."

The bad news is that there's another key to reform that's not contemplated in either bill: accounting reform. The fixes passed by Congress after the collapse of Enron in 2001, it turns out, were nothing but cosmetic changes that papered over the crisis. They did nothing to stop Lehman Brothers from inventing off-book accounting scams with code names like "Repo 105," or to force AIG to report the massive risks it was amassing, or to prevent Goldman Sachs from masking Greece's debt with phantom trades. "Was Enron a giant how-to manual?" asks Warren. "Have we learned nothing from Enron but how to do it? It's in everybody's analysis now of what went wrong in the current crisis – and yet there's virtually no serious call to deal with it."

If anything, funny-money accounting has received a federal seal of approval. Remember all those "toxic assets" that TARP funds were supposed to buy up and dispose of? They're still on the books of big banks. The only thing that's changed are the accounting rules. With a wink from federal regulators, banks can now pretend that such assets are worth more than any buyer would pay for them. The same behavior has defined the response to the looming crisis in commercial mortgages. By the end of 2010, Warren calculates, half of all commercial real estate loans will be underwater. But so far, the government's response has been, once again, to simply tweak the rules for how to account for loans in default.

The goal of financial reform is to lay out the rules of the road for the next 50 years. But the best guardrails, Warren says, aren't going to make much difference if our economic engine blows up because we failed to make the necessary repairs. With toxic assets and commercial real estate, the economy's "check engine" light has gone on twice. But instead of fixing what's wrong, we effectively told the mechanic, Just turn off the damn light.

This "extend-and-pretend approach," says Warren, destroys transparency and makes financial statements meaningless. "If this part doesn't get fixed," she warns, "then every effort to rebuild the economy will ultimately fail."

Warren knows that passing real reform will be tough, given the influence of Wall Street. Over the past decade, the financial sector has spent nearly \$4 billion - more than any other industry - to sway policy in Washington. Capitol Hill now swarms with more than 1,400 bank lobbyists three for every member of Congress. Chris Dodd, the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, is not seeking re-election, in part, because of a scandal in which the nation's largest subprime lender gave him a sweetheart deal on his mortgage. And President Obama's top economic advisers played a central role in lifting key regulation, as Larry Summers did in the Clinton White House, and failing to police the reckless bets that caused the crisis, as Timothy Geithner did as head of the New York Fed. "There are times I despair." Warren says. "A year and a half ago, I thought that the will would be there to rewrite the rules of the road. But the Wall Street lobbyists have so dominated the conversation in Washington that even the most obvious reforms have become a heavy lift."

But Warren hasn't given up. In recent weeks, she says, the prospects for meaningful reform have gotten considerably brighter, thanks to the president's victory on health care. "There was a point that Washington would have accepted anything," she says. "A couple of statutes that there could be a nice signing ceremony around – and everyone dusts their hands off and says, "That's great. We're done.' But we're past that point. I don't think they can get away with that anymore."





HOW 42BELOW

MET THE MARTINI

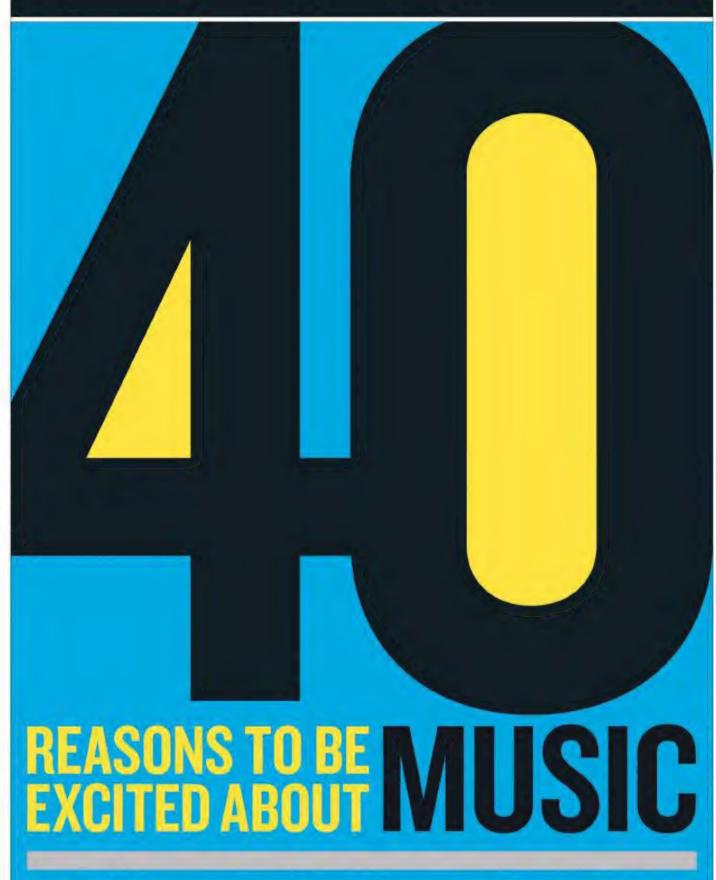
Actually, our friend Paul tried it. And he was all like, "This is so good I would bathe in it." So being the marketing guys at 42BELOW, we let him. Is that so wrong?



IT'S VODKA. FROM NEW ZEALAND.

COURT AND THE COURT OF THE CONTROL OF THE COURT OF THE CO





Say it loud: This moment is exploding with reasons to celebrate music. Whether you're into old-school roots, psychedelic freakouts or next-wave gadgets, music is evolving faster and blowing up louder than ever. The future is here – and it rocks.



WILL.I.AM AND THE SCIENCE OF GLOBAL POP DOMINATION

BY CHRIS NORRIS

ANY YEARS AGO, A GREAT American shared a dream that one day our nation's children might sit at the table of brotherhood, that justice and freedom might ring through the land, and that a 35-year-old black man in leather pants and glitter boots might lead 73,000 Texans as they sing in one voice: "Whatcha gonna do with all that junk - all that junk inside your trunk?"

That day is here at Houston's Reliant Park, which pulses with the lights, sounds and smells of the 78th annual Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, concert site for giants from Elvis Presley to Miley Cyrus. Tonight's headliners, the Black Eyed Peas, appear after the six-year-old sheep riders of "Mutton Bustin'." Midway through their first smash hit, 2005's "My Humps," singer Fergie struts the stage catwalk in a skintight metallic suit like the sleek android of Fritz Lang's Metropolis, only with hair and the song's titular "humps." "I drive these brothers crazy," she raps as Peas Apl.de.ap

and Taboo strike street-ogler poses. "I do it on the daily."

When the chant returns, eight giant video screens flash the broad, beardfringed and enigmatic grin of the song's author and master Pea, Will.i.am, who pauses to thank the group's followers: "Houston, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts to the depths of our souls. In 2005, we put out a record called Monkey Business," he says, then names two outlets that drove it to 10 million sales: "Tower Records and Virgin. They don't exist anymore." The crowd roars. "Last year, we re-







leased our latest record and it's because of you it sold-

"I wanna say something!" Fergie says. cutting in. "Hi, Mom and Dad!"

The nation's largest rodeo is merely one of the last dominoes to fall in Will.i.am's global campaign to build the world's most ubiquitous music brand. In the 15 years since forming the Peas, Will.i.am has toured the world a dozen times, sold 27 million albums and done ads for Apple, Pepsi, Target, Verizon and the president of the United States. "He's a real force," says Bono, who enlisted Will.i.am to work on U2's 2009 album, No Line on the Horizon. "He's got the biggest songs on Earth right now, he's the most wonderful spirit to be around, and he's interested in the macro as well as the micro.'

In fact, his view is so macro he's unlike virtually any musician that preceded him. To Will.i.am, songs aren't discrete works of art but multi-use applications - hit singles, ad jingles, film trailers - all serving a purpose larger than music consumption. Creatively, he draws no distinction between writing rhymes and business plans, rocking arenas and PowerPoint, producing albums and media platforms, all these falling under a cleareyed mission to unite the largest possible audience over the broadest range imaginable. It's a mission he com-

CHRIS NORRIS wrote the Lil Wayne cover story in RS 1098.

municates with a combination of Pentecostal zeal and Silicon Valley jargon, suggesting a hybrid of Stevie Wonder and Steve Jobs. In conversation, he has a tendency to drop koanlike pronouncements that, like his songs, often go from moronic to brilliant with repeated listening. A journey through the mind of Will.i.am follows a twisty trail, but if you pay close attention certain themes emerge....

MAKE ART WORK IN SQUARES

Backstage in Houston, Will.i.am has changed out of his costume into street clothes: a black Jedi-ish shawl-collared shirt, punkish low-slung trousers and a shoulder satchel made of recycled soda flip tops. While dancers, managers and bandmates chatter behind him, Will.i.am starts breaking music and commerce down to

"HE'S A REAL FORCE," BONO SAYS OF WILL.I.AM. "HE'S GOT THE **BIGGEST SONGS ON EARTH RIGHT NOW."**

subatomic particles. "It's about frequency, currency," he says. "The words 'current' and 'frequent' - what do they mean? Time. If currency also means something you can spend, that means it's fluid - a current. If I'm currently doing something and keep doing it, I'm doing it frequently. And if I change my frequency to being positive, I attract currency.'

Will.i.am speaks quickly, stands a bit too close, and keeps his wide-set eyes fixed on yours like a boxer's cornerman psyching his fighter up. "Every time music was put out on circles, it was successful," he says. "When records came out, you had 45s, then 33s, then 12-inches - all multiples of three, all circles. As soon as tape decks came out and there were 8-tracks square. Didn't work. A cassette is a rectangle - didn't work. CD came out - through the roof. The iPods and laptops put music on rectangles - doesn't work, can't monetize it. You have to figure out how to make art work in squares."

After taking a call from Interscope chairman Jimmy Iovine, Will.i.am returns and gives a quick summary of their conversation. "'Hey, Will, it's Jimmy," he says in Iovine's hoarse Brooklynese. "'Blahde-blah, congratulations, blah-de-blah, through the roof, blah-de-blah, gamechanging, blah-de-blah, one billion," "'One billion?'" asks Will.i.am. "'One billion,'" says Iovine. "'Yes,'" says Will.i.am. "'OK,'" says Iovine. "'Bye.'"



ONESIZE SHOUL REVER



Will could easily be a stand-up comedian, with his uproarious, infectious laugh and spot-on impersonations of everyone from ad execs to Aussie ravers to Michael Jackson, all recent members of a calling circle that now includes Bono, Quincy Jones, Oprah, Hugh Jackman, Diddy, a founder of You'Tube, Prince, the CEO of BlackBerry and – as a sheer mathematical certainty – Kevin Bacon. Unlike most fans. Will i am learned of Jackson's

fans, Will.i.am learned of Jackson's death in Los Angeles not from CNN but from 20 text messages he received while DJ'ing in Paris, whose conflicting information he sorted out with updates and eventual confirmation in a phone call with Quincy Jones – who was in Moscow.

CONTROL THE CLOUD

While Will.i.am's producing credits read like a playlist on shuffle -Nas, Sergio Mendes, Celine Dion, the Rolling Stones - his influence now stretches into the boardrooms of BlackBerry, YouTube and other companies that consider the MC a tech visionary. "He'll sit with Evan Williams at Twitter or Chad Hurley at YouTube and give them ideas for their business," says legendary Silicon Valley venture capitalist Ron Conway, whose startup investments have included Google, PayPal and - most recently - Will's own socialmedia platform, Dipdive, which is kind of like a cross between Facebook and Hulu (but as of now seems mostly to exist to promote the Peas).

"Corporations use words like 'cloud computing' and 'data cloud," Will says. "This thing we all communicate with is in the clouds, on a tiny bandwidth that very few people control."

Will intends to be one of them. With Dipdive, he plans to build an entire distribution system – from singer's voice to user's earbud. Selecting artists from various fields on a "dopeness" criteria, Will.i.am says Dipdive's filtered, curated social-media platform will unite millions of "partners" and play a role somewhere between ad agency, record label, radio and TV network. "That's coming in 2013," says Will.i.am. "The biggest artist is going to do it all: play, produce, remix and distribute music. The next Jimi Hendrix or John Coltrane will play the whole system. He's coming by 2013."

WHOEVER CRACKS DANCE MUSIC WINS

On paper, the Black Eyed Peas sound like the worst band you can imagine: one brainy leader, one break dancer/martial artist, one Filipino MC who learned English at age 14 and one rock chick/ex-meth addict. Like a true visionary, Will flipped these deficits into a global-domination scheme. "I go to Brazil, they think I'm Brazilian," he says. "I go to Panama, they think I'm Panamanian, because I speak Spanish." In Sweden? "They like Fergie. We'll put her in front. South America? Taboo, you get in the front, be Latin! Southeast Asia? Apl, go! Speak Filipino!"

In 2008, Will.i.am found the final key to claiming a global audience. He was in Australia shooting a co-starring role

Will.i.am DJ'ing at a Grammy party in L.A. in January.

as the teleporting mutant John Wraith in X-Men Origins: Wolverine when he had one of those everything-you-know-is-wrong insights: After asking some friends to bring him to a hip-hop club, he was told, "'Ip-'op's daid, mate. Electrow." He returned to the States possessed. "I came back hollering, 'Dance music, Jimmy [Io-vine], dance music! Whoever cracks dance music wins."

Will approached *The E.N.D.* less as an album than as a DJ set – and even hired the French superstar DJ David Guetta himself to produce the second single, "I Gotta Feeling." "The only reason I see to

"MC HAMMER
OPENED THE DOOR
FOR US," SAYS WILL.
"WITHOUT HIM,
THERE'S NO PUFFY,
THERE'S NO ME."

make an album is to occupy an hour with a mood," Will says. "If I'm a doctor and you say, 'I just want to dance,' I prescribe this." Hence, 15 midtempo, upbeat tracks, light on gray matter and heavy on good vibes. Of critics who impugn their simplicity, the Peas say that such people aren't using *The E.N.D.* as directed: "It's meant as escapism," says Fergie. "We specifically wanted people to forget about their

money problems, losing their jobs, their homes."

ADAPT EVERY TUNE TO A SPECIFIC USE

To Will.i.am, songs are fluid, freefloating entities that function in various frequencies. In some of those frequencies - like frequently played ads that function tends to bring currency. Lots of it, For nearly a decade, the Peas have been perfecting a music style that works seamlessly in commercials. In 2003, they rereleased the modestly performing "Let's Get Retarded" as the NBA theme. "Let's Get It Started." That same year, the band broke in America, largely thanks to Apple's use of "Hey Mama" in an iPod commercial. In 2009, the group debuted "I Gotta Feeling" months before its official release as the theme song to CBS's summer prime-time lineup - and that was just the beginning. The Peas performed outside Oprah's studios, then went on to play Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve. Super Bowl weekend, the Grammys and a live set in Times Square shot by

James Cameron's company, to be released as a 3-D concert film. By 2010, the Earth was Planet Pea.

In a way, this was a macro version of what Will does everywhere he goes. "If we go to a party, I'll just be chilling in the corner, absorbing everything," says Apl.de.ap. "I'll look over and see Will talking with Prince." Two years ago, Prince invited Will.i.am to sit in with him at a show in Las Vegas. Will asked if he could invite a singer-songwriter he was working with - Michael Jackson, who Will says had a beef with Prince running back to a 1983 misunderstanding at a James Brown concert. Jackson showed. "I told Quincy, and he was like, 'I can't believe you got Mike to go there," says Will.i.am. "Prince and Michael Jackson? Come on, dude. That's connecting worlds."

Of course, connecting worlds can do wonders for the connector. In a 2009 Pepsi commercial, Will.i.am rapped over Bob Dylan's "Forever Young" while a digital montage branded him the successor to rock's greatest songwriter. A year earlier, he took a chunk of Barack Obama's stump speech, added a guitar part played by actor Bryan Greenberg, tapped a friends list that included Scarlett Johansson and Kareem



BE THERE. THAT.





Abdul-Jabbar, and released a video watched 26 million times - that helped sweep a one-term black senator into the White House. "Yes I Can" didn't ex-

actly hurt Will.i.am's profile either, making him the songwriter of America 2.0.

SELL YOUR MUSIC TO THE AUDIENCE. THEN SELL YOUR AUDIENCE

Will's unorthodox views on blending art and commerce - a bit extreme even for hip-hop - stem from an outsider perspective he's had since childhood. He grew up in the mostly Mexican projects of East L.A. and was bused daily to a magnet school in prosperous Pacific Palisades. To survive, he had to learn how to be a chameleon. "Being a black guy in an all-Mexican neighborhood who went to an allwhite school - I don't give a fuck what anybody says," says Will. "There's a reason why I am who I am, that upbringing and conditioning. 'Why you dressed like that, ese?' he says, channeling a cholo neighbor. "Then I'd go to school with Brett and Brent," he says, going white boy. "'Hey, William.' Today, people are like, 'Where you from, London?'" says Will. "'No. That's an East L.A.-and-whiteboy accent.'

Initially a break dancer, Will had switched to MC'ing by high school and formed the De La Soul-inspired hip-hop group Atban Klann with fellow breakers-turned-MCs Apl.de.ap and Taboo. Will scored his first record deal in 1992 by winning a Hollywood freestyle battle against Twista, the Chica-

go MC who would light up his and Kanye West's "Slow Jamz" and who once claimed the Guinness World Record for speed. Asked how he slew such a dragon. Will.i.am says, "My thing was, I do what you're doing better than you."

By pursuing just that strategy, Will.i.am built a Black Eyed Peas that delivers: pumping excitement, giddy spectacle and a message of peace, love and paninoffensiveness. As it happens, those are the exact qualities ad agencies seek for selling just about anything - a fact that has blurred the boundaries between song and ad as the Peas' fame has continued to rise. The E.N.D.'s rock song "Now Generation," for instance, doesn't just bear a close titular resemblance to a Pepsi jingle, it sounds like one: a defiant declaration of young consumers united by a taste for the new. The fact that Will is also a Pepsi-sponsored artist who wrote a 2007 song called "More" specifically for a Pepsi ad makes things even more nebulous. Do the Peas make songs? Or jingles?

To Will, the very question is so 20th century. "Since the 1960s, it's been a taboo for bands to fuck with brands, like they should only sell music," he says. "But music was never the product. When you played in a bar, music drew people in to sell a ticket and drinks. The first music industry was publishing, because they sold sheet music." Beethoven? Verdi? "They were selling ag-

> gregation, the ability to bring people to a concert hall."

REAL GANGSTAS DON'T RAP

Until he was 14, smart. music-obsessed William James Adams Jr. wore a Mom-enforced dress code of suits and an Afro. When this was repealed in ninth grade, he chose the flat-topped style he wears today, the Gumby, which perfectly complemented the harem-pants ensemble

he wore to his first live concert: a 1989 USC performance by a man he still calls an inspiration. "People are going to shit on me for saying this, but it's the fucking truth," says Will.i.am. "MC Hammer opened the door for all of us. Without Hammer there wouldn't be Puffy, there wouldn't be me."

But he owes just as much to the founders of gangsta rap. Atban Klann's first record deal was with Ruthless, founded by N.W.A's Eazy-E. While Eazy's 1995 death from AIDS derailed the project, the gangsta rapper confirmed something Will already knew. "I'm from the fucking projects, and the gangsters, the real niggas - they're out doing shit," he says. "They're out calling shots, ain't got time to rhyme. It's the little soldiers that want to be like that dude: Those are the gangster rappers."

Despite first appearing on an Eazy-E single called "Merry Mothafuckin' Xmas," Will says his progressive, pan-racial vision was in place from the beginning: "On our first underground record, 'Joints and Jam,' we said, 'We're about mass appeal, no segregation/Got black to Asian and Caucasian....' It was part of the plan. My first album was Behind the Front. Which meant, 'This is what I truly am, behind the front."

ALWAYS LISTEN TO THE GIRLS

Shortly after entering a Black Eyed Peas afterparty at a velvet-rope Houston club where Jay-Z's "Empire State of Mind" is followed by a string of Black Eyed Peas songs - Will.i.am pronounces the vibe wack, lets a few drunks blast him with digitalcamera flashes, and ducks out into a waiting car. He's headed to an after-afterparty where he'll DJ what he promises will be "some real underground shit." On the ride to the spot, Will asks the club's promoter what kind of music the crowd likes. "Oh, they'll like whatever you play - Top 40, hip-hop, dance," says the young white



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YDRO

FREE YOUR SKIN

dude, whose girlfriend cuts him off, saying, "Electro."

"Always listen to the girls," Will.i.am says later, a theorem with the corollary "Hook the 14-year-old fan." "Why? Because I fell in love with music when I was 14, and you couldn't tell me anything – I thought I knew what was going on. I built my personality off of music I listened to at 14."

Minutes later, amid the flashing lights and jackhammering beats, Will sets up a MacBook and a rectangular interface with illuminated knobs and buttons. As the crowd screams, he pulls on a pair of orange headphones and picks up a mike. "Yo – Houuuuuuuston," he calls out, triggering a dramatic orchestral synth chord from a David Guetta record. "Yall ready to rock?"

With a hand-chopping flourish, Will kicks in a pounding techno beat, then sets into a live performance of rapping, chanting and cross-fading between four channels on a system he calls "iTunes on steroids." His shades and fade suggest Wesley Snipes' vampire hunter Blade, as he weaves his own beats with "remixes of other people's remixes of classic records," drawing from a massive hard drive of tunes.

'On to the next, on to the next, on to the next," he chants, as he segues from Basement Jaxx's 2001 "Where's Your Head At" into the opening of Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" and into Pat Benatar's "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," whose chorus he merges into that of the 2009 hit "Shots" by the electro group LMFAO, whose MCs Redfoo and Sky Blu he has known since high school and whose father and grandfather, respectively, is Motown founder Berry Gordy. "If you're a DJ at the top of your game, you got 80,000 people in the middle of Los Angeles in the hood," says Will. "Eighty thousand cats. No Rihannas, no fuckin' Beyoncés. D.Js."

THE WHOLE SONG SHOULD BE A CHORUS

As a songwriter, Will.i.am ascribes to Moore's Law, the software principle whereby increasingly smaller devices hold increasingly more information. "Right now, every chorus is getting shorter and shorter," he says. "Soon we'll be listening to blips. Nowadays, the more complex things sound, when you break them down, all the veils and sheets are just disguises." On the other hand, an apparently simple song, like "Boom Boom Pow," is actually downright avant-garde. "It has one note," says Will.i.am, "It says 'boom' 168 times. The structure has three beats in one song. It's not lyrics - it's audio patterns, structure, architecture. Lots of people say, 'Black Eyed Peas shit is simple,' and I'll be like, 'No, fool, it's the most complex shit you even could fathom, that's the reason it works everywhere around the planet."

Will.i.am can apply this kind of thinking to any tune. So how would he rewrite the national anthem? He suggests a simple approach. "There wouldn't be no verse and chorus," he says. "The whole song should be a chorus. It should be about a minute and have highs and lows able to be sung by males and females in all keys." The mix to shoot for, he says, is "We Are the World," for its ingenious simplicity, and the Dolly Parton-penned Whitney Houston hit "I Will Always Love You," which ruled the charts for 14 weeks - a feat matched by the Peas' "I Gotta Feeling." The new anthem, says Will, "should tell our stories, say we've done bad things, that we've suffered and grown, and we care about the future. The Whitney Houston song has all that - humility and passion and pain and joy and love all at the same time. You take those two approaches and marry them - that's power. That's how America should talk to the world."

GO STRAIGHT TO JOY

In the cold reality of the marketplace, networking, promotion and synergy do a fine job of making the mediocre popular every day. The rarer successes, those that truly win hearts and minds, work an alchemy even Will.i.am hasn't quite wired, one he discusses without mentioning brands, audio patterns or BPMs. "What is the easiest emotion to act?" he asks. "Anger. What is the hardest? Joy. That's 'cause joy is complex. It's somber, sad, happy, heartbroken, hopeful - it's all these emotions in one. What you hear in 'I Gotta Feeling'? To me, that's joy. You're in pain, but tonight's going to be a good night. You can't feel happy when you've been pissed off the whole week. You have to go straight to joy."

He thinks back to an insight he got from Bono. "Bono said, 'Our music gets to people closer than you ever can be: You're in their ears, they put us in their head.' That changed my whole view on things. Someone consciously put you this close to their brain. That's serious."

Within two weeks of that conversation, Will was back at his home in Los Angeles. It was a year after he had stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial next to the new president, a moment during which his mind raced with thoughts about his childhood, his hour-and-a-half bus ride to school, his grandmother. "I was thinking of her watching the inauguration of a black man as president with her grandson onstage – all those thoughts running through me," he says. "I was up there and I was like, 'Why me?"

And within an hour he wrote "I Gotta Feeling," a song that nails every single note of a state-of-the-art, multi-user, good-time delivery system – although its intended use, its reason for existence, may be just as significant to its success.

"Nobody asked me to write 'I Gotta Feeling,'" says Will.i.am. "It just came." ©



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No.2 ROCK FESTIVALS RULE!

Over the past decade, American festivals have revived rock & roll's communal spirit. Here's what we love about the four best, with guest commentary from the Flaming Lips' Wayne Coyne, who's played all of them

COACHELLA

Indio, CA April 16th-18th Tickets: \$269 Capacity: 60,000

BONNAROO

Manchester, TN June 10th-13th Tickets: \$235-\$250 Capacity: 80,000

LOLLAPALOOZA

Chicago August 6th-8th Tickets: \$215 Capacity: 75,000

ALL TOMORROW'S PARTIES

Monticello, NY September 3rd-5th Tickets: \$250 Capacity: 3.000

Why You Should Go

More glamour, less odor: a superstylish, celebstudded crowd rocking out to alt-rock gods, Nineties reunions and the buzziest of buzz bands. This year's highlights: Pavement MGMT. Faith No More, Thom Yorke.

It's like Neverland for granola rockers: The freewheeling. anything-goes vibe means there's no curfew. so bands play epic sets. Expect insane variety, from Stevie Wonder to LCD Soundsystem, and Jav-Z to Kings of Leon

The Nineties tour finally has a home - in an urban lakeside park - and the most mainstream lineup, including the only U.S. fest gigs by Lady Gaga, the Strokes, Soundgarden and Green Day.

A wet-dream lineup for underground-rock geeks - curated by arty tastemakers like Jim Jarmusch - in an intimate. no-VIP setting. Top picks: the Stooges, the Breeders Sonic Youth.

Defining Moments

The just-reunited Pixies' scorching 2004 set; Arcade Fire's 2005 coronation as rock's great new hope; Wayne Coyne debuting his crowdsurfing bubble in '04.

The crazy late-night jams: My Morning Jacket's 35-song monster set in 2008: Neil Young's 2003 three-hour epic.

Rage Against the Machine's pandemoniuminducing set in 2008. "70,000 people jumping up and down in unison," says promoter Charles Attal.

The first U.S. gig in 16 years by U.K. noiserock legends My Bloody Valentine in 2008. "I had to wear earplugs," said Patti Smith. "But it was magnificent."

Still Not Convinced?

There isn't a better fest for people-watching: You might see Claire from Lost and Danny De-Vito bugging out to Muse.

Music nearly 24 hours a day. a killer comedy tent and movie theater, and the tastiest ribs in Tennessee, Sign me up, bro!

The Chicago clubs keep the music going late into the night. Bonus: You don't have to sleep in a tent and if you try to, you'll get arrested.

The anti-ego, summer-camp vibe: The musicians mingle with fans, there's ping-pong and rowboats. and Chicago indie legend Steve Albini hosts a latenight poker room.

Wayne Coyne Says

"You either like the experience of standing in a giant field in the hot sun for three days, or you don't. The heat is a motherfucker, but the lineup is always stellar."

"Bonnaroo is so mellow - it's the perfect place to take acid and watch the stars. You can go, not see any music, and still think, 'What a fucking great experience.'

"Time your shitting so you can go in the hotel and don't have to shit in

those porta-potties. Because, man, they get hot and they get filled up quick."

*ATP is a community you get the sense that you're around your people. You're not going to be standing next to some guy who likes John Mayer,"

WHAT I'M EXCITED ABOUT BY TREY ANASTASIO

Recording on My iPhone

I'm obsessed with this recording app on my iPhone the Sonoma Wire Works FourTrack. It's like you have a superpowerful studio in your pocket. I can record basically anywhere. Like, I was having lunch with my friend Steve Pollak in New York recently; he brought a bunch of lyrics, and we started writing on the spot - we were on the corner of 94th and Amsterdam, singing harmonies and bass lines at the top of our lungs into the earpiece. People eventually started gathering around us. The demo captured that whole vibe - the excitement of being out on the street. I don't think I would've even remembered the melody by the time I got home. We took it to band practice, learned the tune right off the demo, didn't change one thing. And now we're going to play the song, "Show of Life," on this summer's tour.



No.3 THE HIP-HOP **ARENA SHOW** HAS ARRIVED

Hip-hop's biggest names have supersized their live shows, embracing the pomp and visual razzle-dazzle that once were the province of rock's heaviest hitters. The watershed was Kanve West's 2008 tour, which married hip-hop and Pink Floyd production values; then Lil Wayne proved that his shambolic charisma could fill hockey arenas. And on his current tour, Jay-Z combines grandiose theater, a 10-piece band and towering LED screens. "I felt like I was at a Springsteen concert," says New York DJ Peter Rosenberg. "There were 45-year-old white women there, mouthing all the words."



U2'S EPIC STADIUM TOUR INVADES AMERICA AGAIN

FTER SIX MONTHS IN STORAGE, U2'S 164-foot-tall spaceship concert stage – 2009's highest-grossing interstellar enterprise this side of Avatar – will touch down in the U.S. again in June. But the 16 additional U2360° Tour dates in North America (and the 22 in Europe) will have some twists this time – including the possibility of songs from a new album that the band has been trying to put together during its break.

"There certainly won't be an album before June," says longtime U2 manager Paul McGuinness. "However, before the end of the year is increasingly likely. What would be really quite interesting would be if some of that material were to be released onstage and on record between now and the fall."

In any case, the band definitely plans to shake up the set lists, which previously combined multiple songs from last year's *No Line* on the Horizon with U2 classics from "Ultraviolet (Light My Way)" to "Where the Streets Have No Name." The second-to-last date of the tour's previous leg, at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, is captured on a new DVD set available June 3rd.

"I can't imagine that we would come back and continue with that exact same show," the Edge told Rolling Stone. "I think we'll naturally want to develop and adapt it." The band should have no shortage of material for a new album: It already had leftover songs from the No Line sessions – some of which were slated for a sister album to be called Songs of Ascent – while Bono and the Edge also began writing an entirely new set of songs late last year. In any case, as Bono put it, "We're only going to do it if it's great."

No.5 Because You Can Watch Any Concert Online in HD

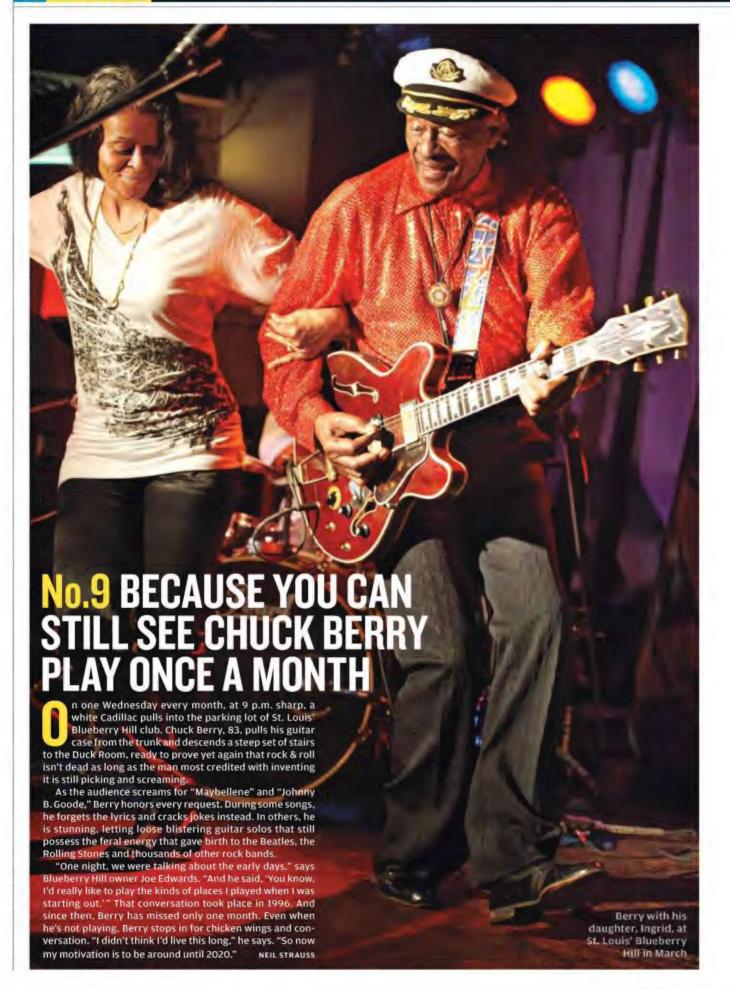
RIK BOLDUC, A 31-YEARold computer programmer, went to Lady Gaga's November 27th show in Montreal armed with a \$300 Panasonic Lumix camera. The next day, he posted stunningly clear clips of "Teeth" and "Bad Romance" which have been viewed 4.1 million times (helped by the fact that Gaga fell on her butt during "Teeth" and Perez Hilton picked up the clip). "Now my wife is mad at me because everyone saw Lady Gaga fall in HD because of me," Bolduc says.

Something has happened to homemade YouTube videos: From Thom Yorke's new band with Flea in New York to Eddie Vedder making a surprise appearance at a London Who gig - they got watchable. Thanks to cheap miniature HD cameras and YouTube's recent picturequality upgrade, fan videos are



miles better than the fluttery cellphone clips of yore.

If you don't mind lower-res videos, you can even watch shows live on sites like Phishtube - which broadcasts fanshot Phish concerts via the iPhone app Ustream. (Phishtube's Twitter feed gives out the URL moments before shows start.) The picture is choppy, but when Bruce Springsteen joined Phish onstage at Bonnaroo last summer, fans all over the world got to see Phish tear through "Mustang Sally" as it happened. ANDY GREENE



BECAUSE INDIE ROCK HAS UPGRADED TO HI-FI SOUND

FEW YEARS AGO, FIDELITY WAS PRACtically a dirty word in indie rock. For a generation raised on punk's no-budget, DIY ethos, high-quality production values were the stuff of corporate sellouts and lite-rock cheeseballs. Making an album that sounded like it was recorded in a sweaty tube sock was just another way to keep it real. "Basically, we want to be the opposite of Bon Jovi," says Black Keys guitarist Dan Auerbach.

But lately - like a bearded hipster slaving

over a batch of handcrafted artisanal hooch - indie acts have been spending time and money to make their records sound, you know, good. Take Of Montreal: For the past decade-plus, frontman Kevin Barnes has churned out albums from a spare bedroom in his Athens, Georgia, home, with barebones equipment. But for the upcoming False Priest, he teamed with Jon Brion and installed himself at L.A.'s legendary Ocean Way Recording, where the

Beach Boys laid down "Good Vibrations" and Frank Sinatra belted out hits between martinis. "They have better mikes, better tubes, better compressors," Barnes says. "We're basically making it sound as good as possible."

It's not just a studio thing, either. "You could offer me some of these places for free and I still wouldn't use them," says Chris Keating, singer for Brooklyn's Yeasayer. "It's the same bullshit leather couch, the same 14-hour

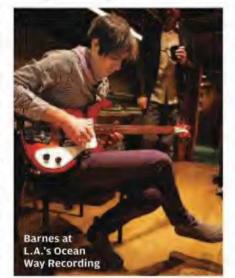
days." Instead, for its latest, Odd Blood, the band used its advance to rent a house in upstate New York and splurge on top-shelf gear. "Our goal was to rival the fidelity of an expensive record," says Keating, citing studio wizards like Fleetwood Mac and David Bowie, "I wanted to compete with Rihanna."

Some bands can thank the economy. In an era of shriveling label budgets, A-list studios often sit unused, meaning indie acts can score them on the cheap. For their recent Teen

> Dream, Baltimore duo Beach House spent three weeks at Dreamland Recording, a converted church near Woodstock, New York, that has hosted the likes of Yo-Yo Ma and Nas. "Nobody has any money," says Beach House guitarist Alex Scally. "These places are desperate for whatever they can get."

> But for some artists, the movement toward improved sound quality is a natural progression. "As a band, you always want to keep challenging yourself,"

says Auerbach. "When it first started, the DIY movement was responding to the fact that some of these big studio records sounded really awful. But at the same time, a lot of the bands we love, like the Kinks or T. Rexthat shit wasn't recorded in anybody's basement. It's cool to keep doing this dumb-ass experimentation, only on really high-end equipment. It still sounds weird - but now it's expensive weird."



No.11 You can score killer concert tickets for under \$50

Great seats don't have to cost three figures. A guide to 2010's best rock for your buck



Green Day: \$45

Where you'll sit: Middle to back of pavilion, close enough to touch Billie Joe Armstrong on his frequent sprints through the crowd.

What you'll get: "It's a marathon," says Armstrong of the band's pyro-filled shows. "People say they put a hundred percent into their shows, but we go beyond that."



Dave Matthews Band: \$40

Where you'll sit: The reserved seats are \$75, but you can get onto the lawn for just over half that.

What you'll get: An ever-changing two-hour-plus set and openers who are stars in their own right. like Zac Brown and Ben Harper.

Phish: \$46

Where you'll sit: Front row or lawn, it's all the same price.

What you'll get: About three hours of jam-gasms. And this summer the band promises new material.



My Morning Jacket: \$45

Where you'll sit: Anywhere you want - a steal for the best young rock band in the country.

What you'll get: There's no new record, so MMJ's sets will dig deep and mix in Jim James' Monsters of Folk tunes. And expect some jamming with openers the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. "Playing with them is very natural," says James. "It's like playing with birds."

WHAT I'M EXCITED ABOUT BY ANDY SAMBERG

South African Comedy Rap

Die Antwoord, this South African art-rap group all over the Internet, is a combo of "What the fuck is this?" and "Wait, is this really good?" The lead dude, Ninja, has been involved in a bunch of projects, so he's embodying a persona. He can actually rap, although in a nontraditional way, so it's not exactly comedy, but it's not entirely straight-faced. I was sold after a close-up slow-mo shot of his dong flopping around in his Dark Side of the Moon boxers. The Net gives people in any corner of the world a shot at success: If you told me about this band, I wouldn't have been interested, but the fact that they could show everyone what they had in mind opens the door for originality and weirdness.



NO.6 JAMES MURPHY LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

DEFINE SOUND NOW

EFORE THE NEEDLE
even dropped on instant
classics like "Daft Punk Is
Playing at My House" and
"New York, I Love You But You're
Bringing Me Down," James Murphy pretty much had a lock on

phy pretty much had a lock on Poet Laureate of Dance Music. A DJ and producer, he scored his first hit as LCD Soundsystem with a comic monologue, "Losing My Edge," perfectly capturing the sounds of urban hipster life in all its twitchy, horny neuroses. Now, LCD are releasing their third album, *This Is Happen*

ing, and Murphy says this disc

required extreme measures.

"It felt like the end of the record industry, so it seemed right to go out and do this strange, comical, mid-Seventies optimistic rock," says Murphy, sitting in his home office in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, a place "where the magic decidedly does not happen." For that, he had to move LCD's crew of New York scenesters out to the liberating anonymity of L.A., rent a run-down mansion, enforce an all-white dress code and stage a threemonth jam session, out of which came nine dance tracks with the kind of impressionistic one-liners any young novelist would kill for. "Love is an astronaut," Murphy sings on "Drunk Girls." "It comes back, but it's never the same." Halfway through recording, Murphy realized that this law applies to music, too. "I've made a career listening to very cool music," he says. "So at the

NO.6 BECAUSE LIVE CONCERTS SOUND BETTER THAN EVER

HEN PHISH STARTED PLAYING arenas in the mid-Nineties, the quartet could never be sure their high-wire improv would sound, as frontman Trey Anastasio says, "like electric Dixieland, with all of us soloing at once." Not anymore. "It's gotten a thousand times better in the past couple of years," says Anastasio. "We need clarity - and the advances in technology have been huge." The muddy bass and distant vocals that used to curse live shows are history, "Five years ago, we wouldn't have been able to attempt what we accomplished on the 360° Tour," says Joe O'Herlihy, U2's live-sound audio director. "What's available now is stuff we used to dream about."

Planning for 360° began a year in advance, when O'Herlihy booted up acoustic audio-mapping software – it shows where and how fast the sound travels within a venue – with presets for every stadium on the tour. "With audio mapping," he says, "we can measure the distance from where Bono is standing to the farthest-back seat and determine the sound pressure required to get the sound up there."

Because of the size of the U2 shows, the band utilized progressive delay – where stacks of speakers are time-aligned to compensate for air absorption of frequencies, and clustered progressively around the audience – so the Edge's guitar reaches every seat at the same time. Some venues – including the Dodge Theatre in Phoenix and L.A.'s Gibson



Amphitheatre – have basically become big studios, with special acoustically flat walls and sound-absorbing treatments to create a dry, moldable sound space. "Mike [Gordon] plays almost lead bass – and all the intricacies of his playing used to get lost," says Anastasio. "Mike is a lot happier now." MATT DIEHL

No.8 THEM CROOKED VULTURES ARE A SUPERGROUP THAT'S REALLY SUPER

oward the end of "Spinning in Daffodils" at a Them Crooked Vultures show in Atlanta, John Paul Jones was playing the piano while Josh Homme and Dave Grohl shared a moment of disbelief. "We were having such a great show, and I sat down on the drum riser and looked at Dave, and I told him, 'I don't want this to end,'" says Homme. "Dave said, 'Me neither."

Two years ago.
Grohl dreamed of
forming a band with
a bro and a hero, and
now the Vultures
are a bona fide
band and getting stronger.
"I haven't Homn

and Grohl (from left) been in this good shape since I was 23." says Grohl. "I'm like Adonis now." Adds Jones, "Dave's a bit funkier now. We listen to each other. There are a lot of parallels of how Bonzo and I worked. It's invigorating."

Grohl points to Jones as the soul and spark plug of the band. "He is drivin' the fuckin' Caddy," says Grohl. "He's such a down-to-earth guy, but sometimes onstage he'll start ripping into some riff so hard that there's no question that he's the guy from Zeppelin."

Watching his rhythm section pummel behind him. Homme is prone to overwhelming happiness. "I feel like the singer from the Spin Doctors, just smiling aimlessly," he says. "Just without the crappy music."

The Vultures are now plotting their second album and have a slate of concert dates stretching into July. "I feel

like we're going spelunking," says Homme, "and we've only just begun to get into the cave."

AUSTIN SCAGGS

end of the record, I started lis-

tening to the music I heard as a

kid. Which is not cool. Some of

the vocals I do" - like his spot-

on impersonation of Heaven 17's

croon - "were like, "This is so

goofy, but I love it!" CHRIS NORRIS

A FREE

AND HIS COMEBACK ALBUM IS ON THE WAY

LMOST EVERY AFTERNOON WHILE T.I. was in Arkansas' Forrest City prison on federal weapons charges, the inmates would gather around the TV to watch BET's daily hip-hop show, 106 & Park, Afterward, everyone would complain to the Atlanta MC that all the other rappers were ripping him off. "People would say, 'They weren't doing that before you left," says T.I., who was released in December after serving seven months in the low-security prison. "I'd be like, 'Don't worry about it, man. It will be addressed when I get back."

So the day the rapper returned to Atlanta to finish his sentence at a halfway house, he stepped up to a mike in his home studio and freestyled the lyrics to his first postprison single, the gritty, defiant "I'm Back," addressing his rivals: "Keep your mind on your grind and off o' mine, all right?"

T.I. didn't write much while he was in prison ("I didn't have a lot of time by myself just to think," he says), but he's been on a creative tear since his release, recording about 60 potential tracks for a new album, tentatively titled King Uncaged, due out in August. "Some songs talk about my time in prison - the way I've grown from that,



things I see now that I may have not seen then," says T.I. "Sometimes I talk about love, some songs I talk about life, some songs I talk about me being the shit on every level."

One thing's for certain: No songs will be about T.I. carrying a gun. "Regardless of what may happen, what circumstances may present themselves, I will not be the one carrying firearms," says the MC, who was arrested in 2007 for attempting to buy an arsenal of weapons, including machine guns. (He says he was buying guns in a misguided attempt to protect himself after his best friend, Philant Johnson,

T.I. considers the upcoming album the last chapter in a trilogy that began with 2007's T.I. vs. T.I.P. and continued with Paper Trail, the eighth-best-selling album of 2008. "If it was a film, the opening act would be the night that Phil got shot and all the emotions and the sentiments that led to T.I. vs. T.I.P.," he says. "From there, the schizophrenia of it all led to an unfortunate chain of events that left me incarcerated on weapons charges, which inspired Paper Trail. Now, people are waiting to hear the end of the story."

T.I. has been working with the producers who crafted his biggest hits, including Jim Jonsin (who made the beat for the Number One song "Whatever You Like"), Danja ("No Matter What") and DJ Toomp ("What You Know"). The MC expects his new album to be compared to All Eyez on Me, Tupac Shakur's 1996 classic, released months after Shakur left prison. "This is the most significant return from incarceration that the game has had since then," T.I. says. "I want to meet the expectations, if not surpass them." EVAN SERPICK

No.13 BECAUSE M.I.A. IS MAD AS HELL ON HER KILLER NEW ALBUM

HEN MADONNA HAD A KID, SHE wrote a children's book. New mom M.I.A.'s next LP, by contrast, includes a blast of ear-burning noise called "Born Free." "You can tell I was pissed off the day I recorded that one," M.I.A. says. The singer, her son and babydaddy Benjamin Bronfman split their time between London and L.A. - where the album was cut. One reason M.I.A. is fired up: Her mother has yet to obtain a visa to enter the U.S., and M.I.A. thinks her

comments on the fighting in Sri Lanka may have been a factor: "She's wanted me to have a baby since I was 20," M.I.A., now 32, says. "And because of what I said, she couldn't come help raise my son." The singer channeled her ire into an album as inventive as anything she's done - "XXXO" is supercatchy electro pop - but also furious as hell. "Sometimes I say the most fucked-up shit on purpose," says M.I.A. "To be an artist, I need to have some freedom to say what I want to say."



No. THE ULTIMATE 14 JUKEBOX IS COMING TO YOUR CELLPHONE

N THE LATE NINETIES, TECHIES STARTed musing about a "celestial jukebox," a cool idea that sounded like a pipe dream: Any song, anytime, anywhere, delivered wirelessly to a magical little device, for one monthly fee? File that one with your flying car, personal jet pack and black president. But if you have an iPhone, BlackBerry or Android, that magical device is in your hand, and the jukebox is finally open for business – for \$10 or so a month.

Despite years of heavy hype, computertethered music-subscription services have

failed to catch on – a new survey of RS readers revealed that 58 percent have no interest. But portable options from a new set of companies, including MOG, Spotify (which has been a hit in Europe but is not yet available here) and Thumbplay, along with longtime player Rhapsody, could change everything. "It's estimated that 160 million smart-

phones will be in U.S. consumers' hands by 2013," says Thumbplay CEO Evan Schwartz. "That's an astounding number that says this can be a gigantic business."

For years, the labels resisted portable subscriptions: "Not having the portability worked out was like buying a book and being told you can't take it out of your house," says David Hyman, CEO of MOG, which will launch its mobile-subscription app in the second quarter of this year. "But now, out of the gate, if you're the kind of consumer that spends \$10

a month on music today, you'd be insane not

to switch. We'll keep pushing the labels to let us bring that price down. I'd like to see that mobile price in the \$5 range. That's when I think that everyone would switch."

Spotify, the world's most popular streaming-music service – it lets users listen all they want on the Web for free, charging only for the mobile version – appears to have stalled in its efforts to come to the U.S.: Some major labels are refusing to authorize the free part of the company's model. But CEO Daniel Ek is optimistic – he's already seen labels' views evolve. "The word 'cannibalize' is

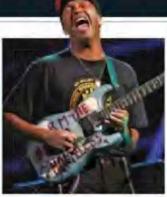
something I encountered probably 5,000 times," says Ek. "They were worried subscriptions would cannibalize their most lucrative customers."

Rhapsody was the first music service in the U.S. with a mobile app, launched last year, but it was hampered by low-bitrate audio that has since improved. Thumbplay's app, launched on BlackBerries in March,

offers higher fidelity, as will the MOG app.

As more players move into the mobile-subscription business, the big question is what Apple might have in the works. Recently it purchased the streaming-music site Lala, suggesting at least some interest in the area. Competing companies question whether the leading pay-per-song company would be willing to jeopardize that business for a subscription model. But that doesn't mean they're not watching closely. "If there's any company I should be worried about," says Ek, "it's definitely Apple."





No.16 Tom Morello Fights the Power With His Guitar

OM MORELLO BECAME THE guitar hero of the 21st century by redefining the language of rock. But after mastering every animal noise and turntable-scratch technique he could think of, he needed a new challenge. So he became a folk singer. "I was playing huge arenas with Audioslave," Morello says, "and on our nights off, I'd find open-mike nights. I had as much invested in those sets in front of 17 people and a grinding coffee maker as I did in arenas. It really felt like a calling."

Under the moniker the Nightwatchman, Morello approaches his new project with missionary zeal, delivering anthems like "Union Song" and "One Man Revolution" in prisons and at protest rallies in a warm baritone, mixing the spirit of social activism with darker emotions, recognizing the enemy within alongside the one without. He credits Bruce Springsteen's invitation to plug in during a 2008 E Street Band performance of "The Ghost of Tom Joad" - a song Morello covered with Rage Against the Machine with recharging his battery and reconciling two sides of his artistic personality. Along with the Nightwatchman and his inmate-outreach work, Morello, with the Coup's Boots Riley, is in the Street Sweeper Social Club, playing Rage-style hip-hop metal with a P-Funk bounce. "I love playing with those guys, and it gives me a platform to shred wildly," he says. "Hey, I practiced eight hours a day as a kid. I might as well let the kids enjoy it."

MISSIO'S FUTURE IS HERE – IN DENMARK

in copenhagen, unlimited tunes come with your cable service. Is the U.S. next

As Bono has pointed out, right now the Internet works like this: Your Internet service provider is getting paid, but the people who make the songs and other content you actually want aren't. But what if your ISP cut a deal

with labels to give you unlimited music? TDC, an ISP in Copenhagen, came up with a crazy idea three years ago: Give away music to customers – without raising prices. TDC customers who pay \$45 a month get a package that allows them to download 6 million songs. The gamble is that people will love it so much they'll stick with their ISP longer. The results are positive so far -TDC's "churn" rate of people who abandon the service has dropped by half. "It's good business," says TDC's Tejs Bautrup. Can it work here? "Definitely," says Universal Music's Casper Bengtson. "In the future, you'll have a music subscription like you have TV."

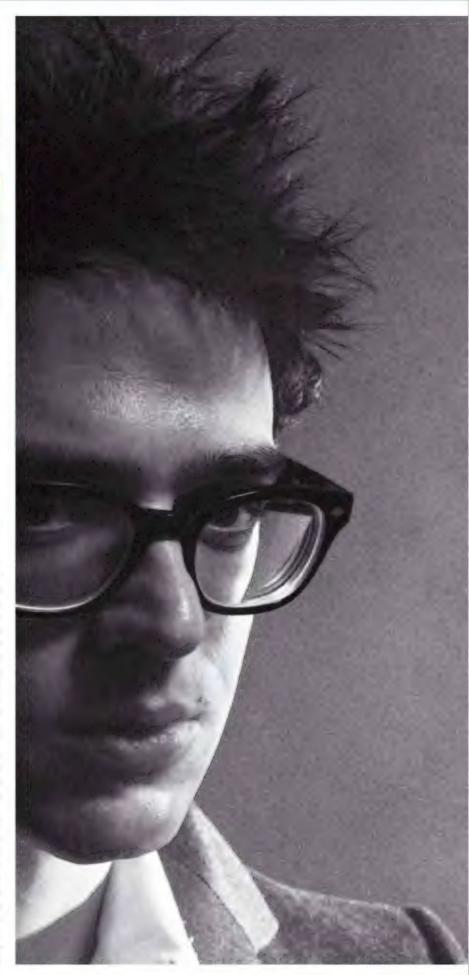
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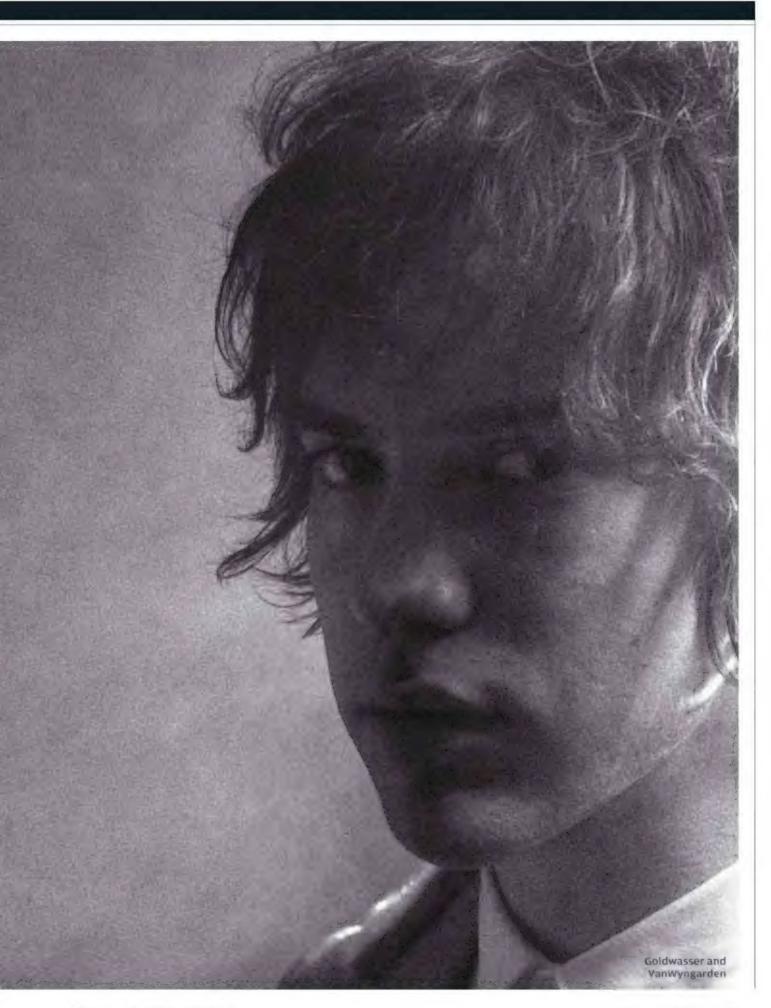
No.17

BREAKOUT BAND REJECTS FAME AND GETS ITS FREAK ON BY VANESSA GRIGORIADIS

OWN A LONG ALLEY, PAST A ROW OF million-dollar Brooklyn brownstones, an elegant 19th-century carriage house has been converted into a playpen for the guys from MGMT. On the first floor, there's a hastily renovated home studio, with the band's gear stacked in the front and a comfy recording studio in the back. A few surfboards lean against a wall, along with a cue card from David Letterman, but none of the awards bequeathed them by their record label, magazines and global TV shows for their blockbuster album, Oracular Spectacular, seem to be in evidence. "Those are in the bathroom," says Andrew Van Wyngarden, snickering before pointing near the toilet, where about a dozen plaques are lined up, some in the original bubble wrap. "We're going to leave them in there, like that," he says. "We're calling it our trophy room."

Becoming everyone's favorite band has weighed heavily on MGMT's minds for the past couple of years. This is their first day of practice for their new tour, and they're figuring out the best way to re-create their new album, Congratulations, with their five-man live outfit: guitarist James Richardson, bassist Matt Asti and drummer Will Berman. But it doesn't seem like they're having a lot of fun. VanWyngarden, the heartthrob, barely manages a greeting. Ben Goldwasser, the übernerd, is in the middle of an argument with his girlfriend on his cellphone. The tour, promotion and







interviews are starting to make them feel like they're falling back into a nightmare. "You finish recording and you wish that you could just put the album out, but we're going to be in here every day for the next month," says Goldwasser, looking down with a grim set to his mouth. "Honestly, I'm beginning to get overwhelmed."

MGMT's feelings about success, and their first album, are complex and somewhat contradictory. "It's so weird for us to be in this position, because we don't understand why we got as popular as we did," says Goldwasser. "We're dorks. We feel like we tricked everybody." One of the monster singles from their first album, "Time to Pretend" (the one about shooting heroin and fucking with the stars, plus models), is a satire of rock stardom, a joke. The problem is that when their album became an inescapable radio, departmentstore and mom-friendly hit, they started to feel weird: guilty, tragic, like sellouts. They felt like the joke was on them.

So there was no way they were going to compromise on Congratulations, which sticks to their core influences, like Syd Barrett and Sixties psychedelic rock. "Our interest in the Sixties started with listening to our parents' records, and it grew when we were in college, when we began hanging out with a circle of friends that appreciated digging up old psychedelic music,' says Goldwasser. For "Flash Delirium," one of the early songs that they worked on, VanWyngarden tried to channel an early-Sixties dance-hall vibe. "I was imagining a sock hop, and there's a bunch of kids at it, but then there's a terrorist attack," says VanWyngarden. "It's about partying but being paranoid about terrorism and the

VANESSA GRIGORIADIS profiled Devendra Banhart in RS 1096.

ELECTRIC FEEL Top: VanWyngarden and Goldwasser in New Jersey in 2009. Above: The entire band - Asti, Goldwasser, VanWyngarden, Richardson and Berman (from left) - at the 2010 Grammys, where they scored a nomination for Best New Artist (they lost to the Zac Brown Band).

chaotic world we're in." Congratulations has a crispy, Grateful Dead-in-1967 vibe - the days when the Dead were still wearing tapered pants and nice boots, the Beatles were taking a lot of acid, and the Sixties were just starting to get really weird.

When the album leaked in March, the online response was mixed. Perez Hilton was outraged at the creative departure, while rock nerds adored the new tributes

"WE DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY **WE GOT AS POPULAR** AS WE DID," SAYS GOLDWASSER. "WE'RE DORKS."

to Brian Eno and Television Personalities' Dan Treacy. VanWyngarden was deeply freaked out by even a hint of negativity: "Not that I give a shit what Perez Hilton thinks, but I was worried that his reaction may well be a glimpse into how a lot of people will react, brushing it off in a split second, dismissing it as old-sounding and not-danceable," he says. MGMT are confident they've made the right album. "Recording Congratulations was the first time in my life that I was able to make whatever music I wanted to make and know that at least a few people are going to hear it," says Goldwasser. "We wanted to make as sincere a statement as we could and not compromise our aesthetics." They began the process in upstate New York a year ago, at a friend of a friend's house, then moved to Malibu to finish the album without distractions, "Sometimes, though, I'd say that I had to go to the store for a little while, and I'd sneak out to surf," says VanWyngarden. "I'd get in the water, eat a taco, and not feel too guilty."

HE TWO CORE MEMBERS of MGMT are very different, though not in exactly the way you would think.

Goldwasser plays the square, hiding his asymmetrically handsome face behind chunky glasses. Van Wyngarden is the slender, sickly Byronic hero with icy-white skin, rosy lips and chalkboard-green eyes with pupils so consistent in color, they look almost two-dimensional. "With Andrew and Ben, where one's talent stops, the other's continues," says Simon O'Connor of Amazing Baby, who has roomed with both of them. "But it's a strange relationship. When I was living with them, there'd be weeks where they didn't even speak to each other. Then they'd spend a whole day writing in Ben's room - and then go their separate ways again. They're like a married couple that has really good sex, but that's it.'

On a deeper level, VanWyngarden is hyperaware, and it's hard to get much by him, whereas Goldwasser has a tendency to go into his own world and trust that whatever happened while he was off in space was good. VanWyngarden is much more spontaneous and naughty than Goldwasser, and they bicker a lot when they're recording. "We're both stubborn and neurotic about music, which is an interesting combination," says VanWyngarden. They're both introverts, and VanWyngarden doesn't even like live music. "I'd rather listen to music in headphones or in a living room," he says. "I don't like crowds."

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Musically, VanWyngarden acts as lyricist and structural thinker, and Goldwasser is the programming mind. Congratulations' producer, Sonic Boom (a.k.a. Pete Kember), a founding member of Spacemen 3, says, "As in all relationships, theirs is not always easy to define. Ben is the sound boffin, but nothing is clear-cut, and they both step up to whatever they're working on. They understand each other like twins."

Although the plaques in MGMT's bathroom are of recent vintage, Goldwasser and VanWyngarden have been writing songs together since 2001, when they met during their first week as freshmen at Wesleyan University, a 2,700-student liberalarts school in Connecticut that caters to academically advanced students who may not have fit into their high schools. Both guys had signed up for rooms in the "weird" dorm, a haven for jam-band lovers, ferret owners and kids who arrived at college very familiar with psychedelic drugs. The Twin Towers fell the second week of school. "I was so paranoid as a freshman, because everything at school was so differ-

ent than home, and then September 11th happened," says VanWyngarden. "I became really scared about terrorism, to the point where I'd hear a lowflying plane and think everything was over." One night, he and Goldwasser took mushrooms and ran around the campus arts center, a collection of limestone buildings that resemble giant tombstones. "It was a good bonding experience," says VanWyngarden. "Sometimes the realizations that I have when I come down on mushrooms make me feel that everything has its own place in the world, even trash. It all makes sense."

VanWyngarden, who says he was "born in an incubator" (he was six and a half weeks premature), grew up in Memphis, where his father runs an alternative newspaper. His parents listened to Bob Dylan and Neil Young, the same music VanWyngar-

den likes now, and he played hockey and collected baseball cards. "The whole global-unity-environmentalist thing of the late Eighties and early Nineties was really big at my school," he says. His older sister was into Phish, and he went to about 20 shows. He describes his high school bands as "hyperweird high school soul-funk rock," and declines to share their names. (One of them was called Glitter Penis.) "I'm glad there's not a lot of documentation from back then." he says.

As his friends reached puberty, Van-Wyngarden began to notice that he wasn't experiencing changes. Around age 15, he was prescribed human growth hormone to jump-start his transition to adulthood.

MGMT talk more about 'Congratulations' at rollingstone.com

"I don't think it was emotionally difficult. though my parents got divorced shortly afterward, and that was difficult," he says quietly. "But I've always had a complex that I wasn't as far along in my growth as my friends."

Goldwasser had a more sheltered upbringing, in a small town in upstate New York where his father practices veterinary medicine. He didn't even taste cow's milk until kindergarten because the fam-

"WE DON'T MEAN TO BE PRETENTIOUS," THEY SAY OF THEIR LIVE SHOWS. "WE'RE JUST NOT

ENTERTAINERS."



RAINBOW CONNECTION VanWyngarden in L.A. in 2008: "I'm not that comfortable with the energy from the crowd."

ily raised goats at home, but all was not as idyllic as it might sound: "From a very young age, I was convinced that the world was evil," says Goldwasser. His grandmother was a piano teacher, and Goldwasser was serious about the instrument, traveling up to two hours for lessons. "As a teenager, I became really lazy, so I never learned how to be a technically great piano player," says Goldwasser. "But I definitely knew more about formal music theory when I got to college than most people."

Wesleyan's politically correct culture was a turnoff for both men, who thought that the focus on identity politics was unimaginatively multiculti. "I think PC can border on a fascist mind-set, where discussion isn't allowed," says Goldwasser. They preferred to align themselves with the art students who were receiving the same indoctrination into the horrors of the patriarchal world but resisted participating in advocacy, and they would play parties at the Art House residence hall. 'As soon as you walked into those parties, there would be a guys' or girls' changing room, and you had to take off your clothes and put on body paint," says Van-Wyngarden. "We played in a covers band there, performing songs like 'I Melt With You' and 'Everybody's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey.' It was so weird to play drums naked."

After forming a band named the Management in 2002, they wrote "Kids" and Time to Pretend" as a way of processing their collegiate experience. They fantasized that they would make it as a band - O'Connor recalls dinners with VanWyngarden where the conversation revolved around what life would be like when they became rich and famous - but they were

> also interested in stopping time, in staying at college forever. The band wasn't a joke, the way Flight of the Conchords is a joke, but they injected a tongue-in-cheek quality into songs like "Pretend." "Those songs are a combination of being sincere and not sincere, caring and not caring," says VanWyngarden. "We were such different people back then."

> FTER GRADUATION, GOLDwasser stayed at Wesleyan to be with his girlfriend, at least until she decided to take a semester abroad. "That was pretty weird," he says. He moved back to upstate New York to build straw-bale houses with some friends, while VanWyngarden hoboed around Brooklyn. They toured some "bad Dad-rock songs" with their friends Of Montreal as well. "These guys were living off their girlfriends,"

says O'Connor. "Andrew was a genius bum. He'd be sitting on his ass eating tacos and come up with amazing songs but not have the drive to do anything with them." Goldwasser thought about enrolling in graduate school for engineering or psychology. "Ben doesn't realize he's a musical genius, and even today talks about going back to school," says O'Connor. "He thinks of the band as a phase."

VanWyngarden and Goldwasser hadn't played music together for six months - or even seen each other much - when Ben moved to Brooklyn in the fall of 2006, and they reconnected. "Brooklyn is interesting and affordable for musicians, and there was a bit of a scene," says Chris Keating of Yeasayer, a friend of MGMT's and a touring partner on some early shows. "The music from Grizzly Bear, Dirty Projectors,



FESTIVAL VETS The duo at Bonnaroo in 2008. The year they released their debut, MGMT played around 20 festivals.

MGMT and our band is very different, but the common thing was that no one was trying to become superstars. Everyone was trying to do their thing, and it just happened that people got psyched on it."

Then the EP they made in college fell into the hands of an A&R rep at Columbia. In six weeks, they were ordering \$24 bellinis on the roof of a Midtown Manhattan hotel with Columbia to celebrate their deal (they also asked the label for fur coats, as a joke, and wrote a rider that requests puppies backstage at every show, because "puppies are awesome" - that part is for real). They tried hard to please the label with Oracular Spectacular, spending the next 12 months playing festivals like Coachella and Glastonbury, and opening for artists like M.I.A., Radiohead and Beck. The reaction from the crowd wasn't always positive. "People come to our shows thinking they're going to see Justice or Daft Punk, but the live bands we're into are the Dead and Crazy Horse," says Van-Wyngarden. "We're not trying to be pretentious. We're just not entertainers.'

This should've been the best time of their lives, but it didn't feel that way. "I've always been slightly depressed and not good at dealing with new situations or meeting people, so touring was pretty much the worst thing in the world for me," says Goldwasser. Both of them were afraid of flying. "If I fly from New York to L.A., it takes me two days to recover," says VanWyngarden. "My skin will freak out, and I won't feel right. I feel like a goldfish being taken from the store."

They also stopped speaking to each other for long stretches of time. "We were in a complete fantasy world when we were in college," says Goldwasser. "We didn't have to react to anything real, so we formed our own impression of life. Then we needed to figure out how to exist in the real world, but we had no idea how to do

it. To have a record deal magically come along - well, we pretty much convinced ourselves that aliens had done it."

In 2008, VanWyngarden broke up with his girlfriend of three years, found himself homeless (he didn't want to get another apartment since he was touring all the time) and contracted pneumonia. "That was the most debaucherous time for me, in terms of drug use, and I feel like my body still hasn't recovered," he says. "I think I took so much Ecstasy that I'm more prone to depression now." One night, during a phase when he was doing a lot of E and Valium (a combination of drugs that feels like heroin-lite), he found himself in Barcelona drinking a bottle of wine and sobbing. He took off for L.A. and started wearing sundresses to screw with his gender identity. "I drove to Joshua Tree, because I thought I was going to find something out there, but nothing happened," he says. His tour manager asked him where he wanted to go next. "I said, 'I don't know, man, just send me to Transylvania." He didn't speak to another person for a week. "I got a massage at the hotel, by a hairy

"BEN AND ANDREW HAVE A STRANGE RELATIONSHIP -LIKE A COUPLE THAT HAS GREAT SEX, **BUT THAT'S IT."**

Romanian guy in a white-tile room with fluorescent lights and no towels," he says. "That place felt like it was run by aliens."

As they continued touring, he really started to dislike Goldwasser. "I'm not all that comfortable with the energy from the crowd, but Ben began not to even say a word throughout the whole show," says VanWyngarden. "That made me more uncomfortable, and then I wasn't saying anything either. And when it felt like the audience wasn't getting into the music, it would spiral and just get worse and worse."

They are both nice kids, so they felt like they should follow the label's directives but VanWyngarden was taking enough drugs that he made everything more difficult than it had to be (he says in this interview that his mom has told him to stop talking about drugs to reporters, but his stories nevertheless often involve drug use). "One night in London, I took acid and then I freaked out at a club and had to be rescued by someone at the label," he says. "I slept for an hour. Then we went to Amsterdam. We got right into a water taxi, and we did press right there in the taxi. Then they took us into a store in the red-light district, and we sat in the window to do press for six hours while everyone looked at us from the street. Then we played a show that night that was filmed.'

Both of them are staunch environmentalists, and VanWyngarden says that he thinks about the plastics in our oceans every day - they're not apathetic at all. But they have chosen to sideline themselves, in a way. "I wouldn't want to be political, because I don't want to trick people into doing things they wouldn't do otherwise," says Goldwasser. Even if he was a force for good? He shrugs. "Even then," he says.

VanWyngarden isn't sure which party to support anyway. "Obama is a lizard person, Manchurian Candidate puppet simulacrum," he says. "You can't trust anybody." He looks down and giggles. "Ah, I don't know, he seems like a nice guy, Obama. Maybe it's all a farce. Life's a farce, isn't it? One big, smelly farce."

In some ways, MGMT's evolution has traced the changes of their generation, which was a lot more idealistic until the last couple of years of political and financial turmoil. "Maybe a few years ago we were the most optimistic generation," says Goldwasser. "But I think once we realized what we've inherited from our culture and the fact that it's now our responsibility to deal with it, we've realized that we're relatively unequipped to do that. We've become really cynical."

FTER PRACTICE, THE BAND WALKS to an ale house for dinner, and then to a bar to hang out with Kember until about 4 a.m. Goldwasser's girlfriend has to get up a couple of hours later because she's in dental [Cont. on 72]

MARC HAMEL; ANJU EPKES; WENDY WILSON

No.18 TRIBUTE BANDS ARE SOMETIMES BETTER THAN THE REAL THING

These four acts are keeping the flame alive, long after their musical heroes have stopped talking to one another

Name and Inspiration

THE AUSTRALIAN PINK FLOYD SHOW

Pink Floyd

A meticulous re-creation of peak Floyd that plays Dark Side of the Moon and Animals straight through, and has been known to restage the 1980-81 Wall tour.

THE FAB FAUX

The Beatles

The champagne of tribute acts: an uncanny Beatles simulacrum led by Late Show bassist Will Lee. No dress-up!

< Will Lee

THE MUSICAL BOX

Perhaps the most obsessive, over-the-top re-enactment in business: a French-Canadian tribute to Genesis that exclusively stages the 1970s prog-rock-era version of the band, down to the haircuts, costumes and verbatim stage banter.

BADFISH

Sublime

One of the most successful tribute bands out there: a Rhode Island outfit that plays around 200 dates and grosses about \$1.5 million - a year, mostly hitting college towns. They also open for themselves, playing originals.

Authenticity

Guitarist Steve Mac perfectly mimics David Gilmour's tone, After 20 years, the Floyd sound "just comes out naturally," says keyboard player Jason Sawford, Bonus: flying pigs and lasers.

Known for doing the full White Album - including "Revolution 9" - and special solo-Reatle-album nights.

The group uses some of the actual Genesis' vintage gear and slide shows from the 1970s.

■ Box's fake Gabriel

The point is to throw a party, not dress (or undress) like the late Brad Nowell. Singer Pat Downes crowd-surfs in a giant Flaming Lips-type bubble. "People have played volleyball with me," he says.

Competition

The band is avoiding booking dates near Roger Waters' 2010 tour, out of respect. But it believes in its mission: "For truly great bands like Pink Floyd, you need interpreters to play the music," says keyboardist Sawford.

Both Ringo and Paul are on the road this summer, but the real guys don't delve this deeply into the catalog. And no other tribute band has this level of chops. "What we really want to do is bring the records to the stage," says Lee.

No mere tribute act can truly compare. They refused to be interviewed because "we dissociate our production from the common cover band."



Danger! The surviving members of Sublime are hitting the road on their first tour since Nowell died in 1996. "We'll be OK," claims Downes.

- Pat Downes

Meeting Their Idols

They were hired to perform at Gilmour's 50th birthday party in 1996. At the end of the night, Gilmour and **Richard Wright** joined them for 'Money."

> The tribute pig

Lee has played with Paul, Ringo and George -

> the latter at Royal Albert Hall in 1992. which was Harrison's final concert. He also jammed on the ukulele with Harrison.

Phil Collins and Genesis guitarist Steve Hackett have both played with Musical Box: Mike Rutherford has donated instruments: Peter Gabriel has seen them live; Tony Banks has played them original multitrack recordings to help them master their parts.

Amazingly, original Sublime drummer Bud Gaugh's band, Del Mar, has twice been a support act for Badfish - which means that Gaugh has opened for his own tribute band.

MGMT

[Cont. from 71] school - she couldn't even go to the Grammys with them earlier this year because she had to study. VanWyngarden's girlfriend, a model, has just left for New Zealand for work, so he's alone now. He lives on the top floor of the carriage house, over their recording studio - it's a beautiful place, with the original tin ceilings from the 1890s and a tiny room that he calls the "psychedelic room," with a black-and-white-striped cabinet and a zebra skin on the floor. "We played a show in Little Rock, Arkansas, and my cousin's friend asked me if I wanted a zebra skin he had lying around, and I was like, 'Yes!'" he says, then giggles. "I don't know if he knew how adamant I was going to be about it."

The next morning, after putting a coat over his candy-red T-shirt, VanWyngarden merges on the street with Wall Street bankers on their way to work. His neighborhood - a bedroom community for Manhattan - is a haven of yuppies and \$40,000-a-year private schools, very far from the Brooklyn of hipsterdom, which is the way MGMT like it. VanWyngarden won't use any sort of social-networking technology; he thinks it's evil ("It's such a shallow way of bringing people together") and that it could be screwing up the process of greater human thought. "I swore I would never live in New York, because everyone from school comes here, but I

like this neighborhood," he says. "I'd rather hang with a bunch of geeky a-cappella weirdos than a bunch of indie-rock kids."

At a breakfast patisserie around the corner, he orders a chicken-salad sandwich, a salad and red-velvet cake, then goes about digging in. He says the one thing he feels good about these days is that he and Goldwasser have started to talk to each other more, that they're more than just musical partners, "The last few years took over the friendship side of things, which was there when we first met a long time ago," he says. "We're getting back to where it used to be now."

Then Goldwasser enters the cafe, wearing the same color T-shirt. "Nice shirt," says VanWyngarden, and smiles.

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IS POP DINAS

BECAUSE WOMEN RULE THE CHARTS

AS POP MUSIC EVER BEEN so in touch with its feminine side? The upper reaches of the charts seem to be exclusively the dominion of divas these days: Lady Gaga, Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Rihanna, Shakira and Katy Perry command the sound, the spectacle, the spirit of the times. Your little cousin has a Miley Cyrus poster on her wall. Your grandparents have a Susan Boyle album in their CD player.

The Top 40 is not merely by women. Increasingly, it's of women: packed with clubthumping megahits about she-wolves and single ladies and fame monsters. The old archetypes are there: good girls (Taylor Swift), bad girls (Ke\$ha), good girls gone bad (Rihanna), femmes fatales (Beyoncé), Earth goddesses (Sade, Erykah Badu) and of course divas in the classical model (Mary J. Blige) – women with huge egos and huger voices, rattling concert rafters with ballads about cruel fate and callous men.

"Everybody wants to be on top - we don't want to give up that spot," says Rihanna.

"And right now there are a lot of women on top – so it's a real *fight*."

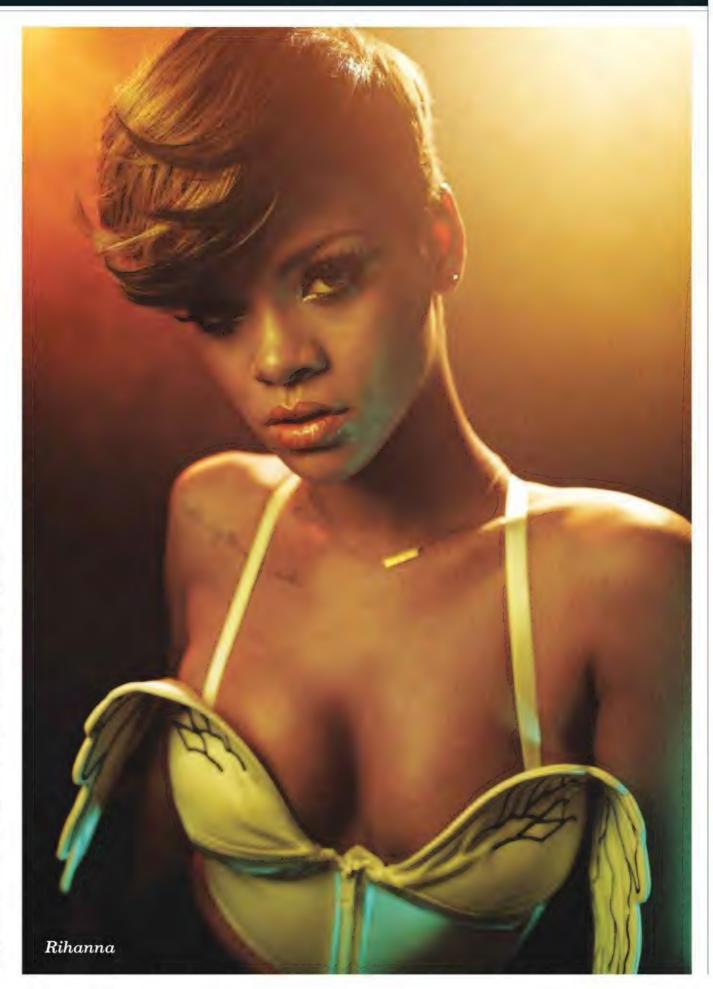
The godmother of today's shape-shifting, hitmaking, media-exploiting women is, of course, Madonna. The model of stardom that Madonna launched in the 1980s and '90s has reached its apotheosis now. thanks to timing and technology. The record industry has collapsed into bits and bytes, and women have swooped into the void, finding new ways to write their stardom large, project it globally and spread it across platforms. In a media-saturated age, being a pop star is not just about making records and playing concerts. As Lady Gaga has demonstrated with such fearsome panache, it's about dressing the part 24/7 and treating the whole world like a gigantic red carpet. "There's no competing with Lady Gaga," says Perry. "You don't even try stepping in her lane. She'll just fucking run you over. She eats, breathes and shits that stuff.

"It's a powerful thing when women play with their sexuality," Perry adds. "Gaga is kind of a creature. It's not just the plainJane sexuality of tits and ass these days. People are getting deep." The next generation is getting the message: "People are able to be more like characters now," says Cyrus. "Now artsy is sexy."

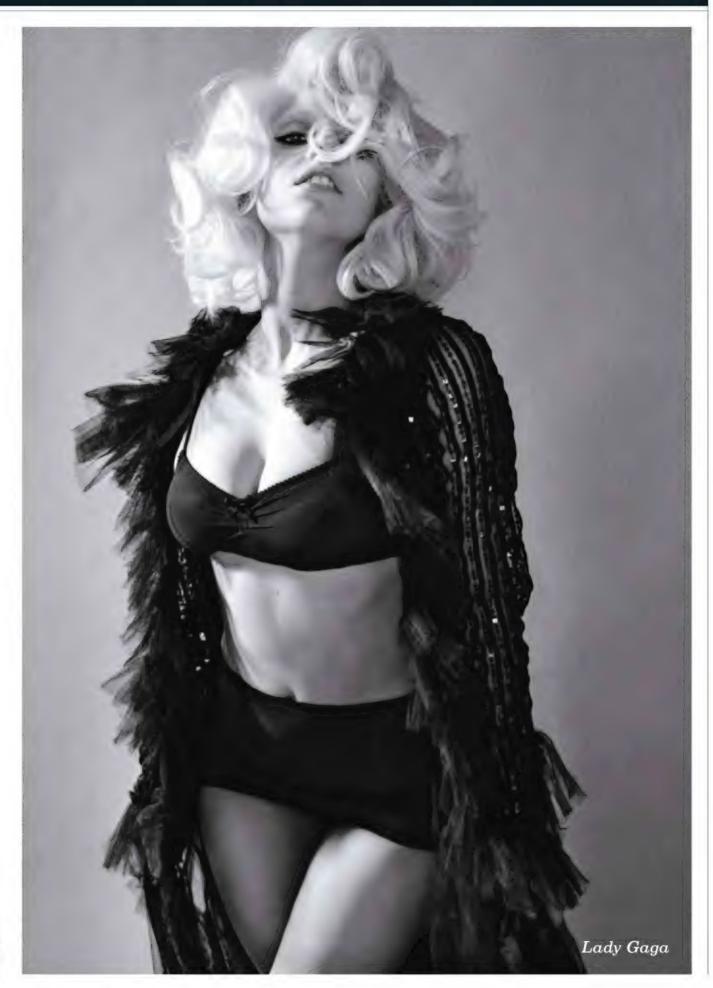
While the ladies flourish, the fellas have retreated to secondary, supporting roles. Once, rappers hired female singers to croon their hooks; now, if they're lucky, they get to spit a few bars in a Rihanna song. Even Kanye West looks diminished these days. In order to get a word in edgewise, he has to interrupt the acceptance speech of one female superstar to stick up for another one.

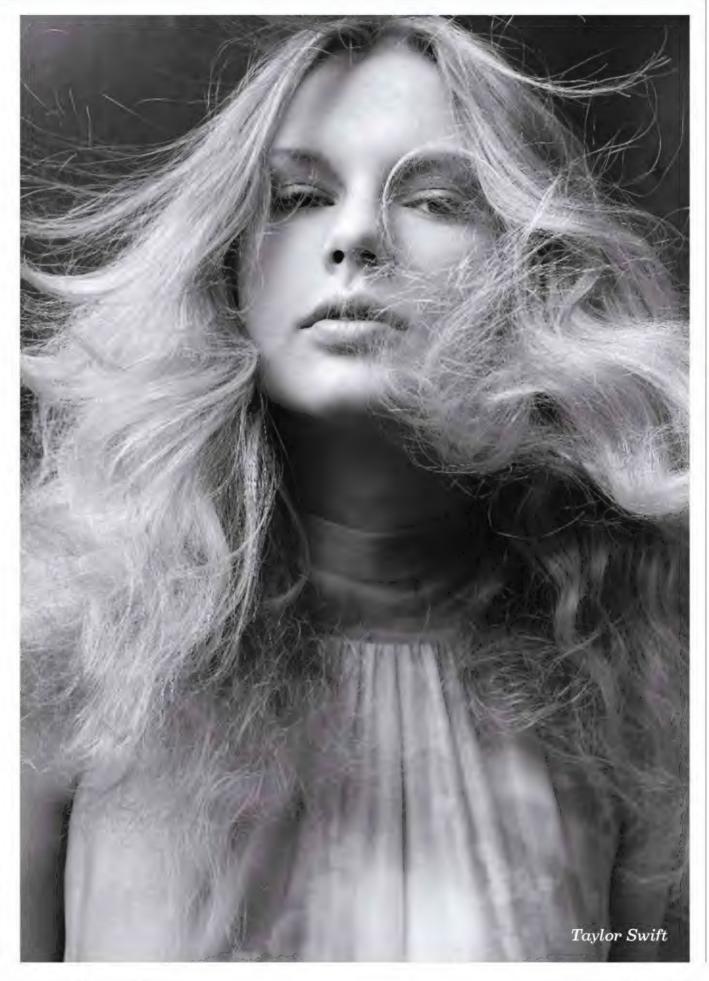
"Women get to play up our features with visuals and costumes," says Perry. "There's only a few men who can get away with that: David Bowie, Prince and now Adam Lambert. There have been some moments recently, like at the American Music Awards, where a male-fronted band came and played, and it was a sleeper. Jeans and a T-shirt and a guitar – it just doesn't work anymore. Unless you're Bob Dylan."











No.20 BECAUSE KEITH RICHARDS HAS WRITTEN AN AUTOBIOGRAPH

This fall, the Rolling Stones guitarist will be releasing his memoirs, for which he was paid a reported \$7 million by the publishing house Little, Brown. In a worldwide exclusive, we've obtained a loose page:

> Right. The day we recorded "Let It Bleed." I remember it like it was bloody yesterday, man. Yesterday I had waitles. Wait -scrambled eggs? What the hell did I have? It was breakfast, anyway. Delicious, man. Warrles.

Right. So yesterday. It was 1968. I was just a lad of 14. Growing up in London, learning to play the blues. Sailors would bring blues records over from the States. I met Mick Jagger on the train to school from Dartiord. He had some sailors under his arm. No, wait, he had blues records under his arm. We both had blues records, from the States, so we began talking and we decided to form a band. Wick and I wrote "Let It Bleed" on the train, and then we had breakfast.

Pass the syrup, mate. Fanks.

What was I talking about? Right. So that morning, Mick and I recorded "Goats Head Soup" at Chess Studios in Chicago. Muddy Waters was outside painting the stairs. He taught me to play in open D. Fucking genius. Then he started painting Mick.

People put an "s" on their name for no reason, then can't remember why, it's mad. A few years there, Mick was Mick Jaggers. I never knew why. Sometimes Mick plays harmonica. See, he doesn't need all that celebrity bollocks. Not down deep. He's got Muddy Waters in his soul. And sailors under his arm.

So after breakfast, Mick and I walked around the desert in Joshua Tree, looking for UFOs, tripping on mushrooms. We were beautiful, baby. The UFOs were scared of us. That was the day we wrote "Jumpin' Jack Flash." Always liked that one.

No.21 THE STROKES ARE GETTING IT BACK TOGETHER

FTER FOUR YEARS OF intraband drama and a handful of side projects, we may be on the verge of a full-blown Strokes renaissance. The hottest tickets of 2010 are the group's performances in June at England's Isle of Wight Festival, and at Lollapalooza in August. "I'm excited, and I'm scared as shit," says drummer Fab Moretti. "But it's going to be crazy!"

After 2006's First Impressions of Earth, the relationships between the bandmates turned sour. "I think [singer Julian Casablancas] felt that people were showing up to work for the Strokes, getting a paycheck and taking their creative energy somewhere else," says guitarist Nick Valensi. For their fourth album, which they've been working on in New York, the four other Strokes came up with the music instead of Casablancas writing 95 percent of the material (as he did on the group's first three albums). "It's supercollaborative, and it

sounds different," says Valensi, "but it has a Strokes vibe to it.

"I'm hoping whatever shit

years don't turn out to be missteps," Valensi adds. "I want to make dozens of albums with



An inside look at the DJ/producer/indie tastemaker's globetrotting life



Los Angeles, New Orleans 1/25-2/17

After a stopover in L.A. to record with Snoop Dogg, Diplo made his way to the Big Easy. "We were taking mushrooms, having psychedelic jam sessions, recording brass bands," Diplo says. "The night after Mardi Gras, we got so high we didn't know what to do. We just drove across Lake Pontchartrain to Mississippi, bought some nacho-cheese-pretzel Combos and drove back."

Jamaica 2/18-3/9

After Mardi Gras, Diplo headed south for three weeks in Kingston and Port Antonio, where he partied and recorded tracks for the next Major Lazer album and logged studio time with Santigold and Lykke Li.



Indonesia 1/16-1/20

For the world's biggest Muslim population, you'd think narcotics might be scarce. Not so, says Diplo: "They actually party harder. There's a club in Jakarta called the Stadium - they sell Ecstasy, Viagra, you can take a shower, you can sleep there."

Taiwan, Thailand, Japan 1/21-1/24

This three-countries-in-four-days blitz for solo shows is par for the course: In the past year, he's visited around 22 states and 26 countries. A committed shopaholic, he also took the opportunity to hit some Japanese vintage shops, stocking up on reggae and psych-rock vinyl and metal T-shirts. "They have hard-to-find shit, like Morbid Angel and Death," he says. "Good sizes, too."



New York 3/10-3/12

Back in the States, Diplo shared a bill with Fergie, Will.i.am and James Cameron at a launch party for a Samsung 3-D TV. He capped the month with a quick trip to Orlando. Checking out some hot new phenom from the Florida underground? Nope: "I'm going to see my grandma."



My New York Soundtrack

We just moved to New York to record our new album. It's my first time living in the city, and the new Beach House album, *Teen Dream*, is my soundtrack for life here. Our apartment has an amazing view, and I just love putting on the record and sitting there to look at the view, watch the skyline go from day to night. Their music is so peaceful and melancholy – it just takes away the busy-ness of New York, where everyone was supposed to be somewhere three minutes ago.





No.23 Rock's Most Tasteful Guitar Player Is Finally Letting Loose

HE HEARTBREAKERS'
Mike Campbell has always
been a strange breed of guitar hero: He's reluctant to engage much in the way of heroics,

preferring to deliver taut, perfect melodic bursts like the four-bar solo that introduces "Refugee." "He's such a great player," says Tom Petty. "His problem is he's so tasteful and doesn't like to show off much." But on the latest Heartbreakers album, the raucous, bluesy Mojo (tentatively due in June), Petty pushed Campbell to step forward. Way forward. "I think this new record has probably more guitar solos than

our whole career put together," says Campbell, who nailed all his ballsy lead parts live in the studio while the rest of the band played. His secret weapon for the sessions was a 1959 Les Paul Standard Sunburst that he recently purchased with his wife's permission (there are only 1,500 of them in the world, and they sell for more than \$250,000). When Campbell plugged in for new songs like the unexpectedly riff-y "I Should Have Known It," he found a thick, aggressive Peter Green-era Fleetwood Mac tone that had long eluded him.

"The guy who sold it to me said, 'A guitar like this could change your life,' and he was right," says Campbell. "I'd love to take it on the road, but I don't think I'd be able to sleep at night."

BRIAN HIATT



BECAUSE ATLANTIC RECORDS HAS ENTERED THE 21ST CENTURY

HE SONG BOOMING OVER THE studio monitors is just a few hours old, and not even finished - but Craig Kallman, co-chairman and CEO of Atlantic Records, is already figuring out how to sell it. The song's producer, former Fugees collaborator Jerry Wonder, is dancing to its retro-disco thump - while Kallman, trim and youthful at 44 in a dark blazer, white button-down, jeans and unstylish white sneakers, nods almost imperceptibly to the rhythm, his lips pursed in an inscrutable grin.

Since Warner Music Group CEO Lyor Cohen teamed Kallman and co-chairman and COO Julie Greenwald six years ago, they've retooled Atlantic as a model for how a major label can thrive in the 21st century: pushing digital music as hard as CDs, branching out into touring and merchandising, and, when most labels are looking for quick hits, betting that longterm artist development will pay off. With hits from a broad range of artists - from country act Zac Brown and Atlanta rapper T.I. to singer-songwriter Jason Mraz and punk-pop band Paramore - Atlantic has had the highest market share of any

label for the past two years. For Cohen, Atlantic's approach epitomizes the "smart, tough" ethos that will allow record companies to thrive in a post-CD era. "A creative company needs to understand that they need to be lean enough, light enough to wait for the hits," says Cohen.

Kallman, an obsessive music fan with a collection of 350,000 vinvl LPs that he believes is the world's largest, leads Atlantic's A&R efforts - signing artists, songwriters and producers, and getting deep into the musicmaking process - while Greenwald handles the business side, including marketing and promotion. "We allow A&R to sign what they want and pick the singles, says Greenwald, "and then we go out, and we try to kill or maim for those singles and those artists."

The song at stake tonight, written and recorded over the past few hours by Wonder and Jeymes Samuel (Seal's younger brother), has obvious commercial potential, with an emotive hook - based around the line "Maybe we might not make it" riding over sleek bass and Quincy Jonesera Michael Jackson synths. By the time the tune ends, Kallman has nailed its primary influence - Manu Dibango's "Soul Makossa" ("You're lucky that was on Atlantic," he teases Wonder) - and decided what to do with it.

"You know who that would be great for? Janelle Monáe," says Kallman, referring to the eccentric R&B star who's one of Atlantic's brightest hopes. She just finished a new album, but in the record business' frantic new reality, that shouldn't keep her from going right back into the studio. "We have the third volume of Twilight, the big movie franchise, and I just talked to her about doing a new joint quickly for that movie - there's a big club, party scene. It's a bull's-eye for the party scene, it's a bull'seye for Janelle Monáe. She will destroy it."

After a full day in the office, it's Kallman's second trip to a recording studio this evening, and, as usual, his workday won't be done until well after midnight. "If I ID'd that one track, and I carry that through to the execution of a hit record, that's a multimillion-dollar decision and a multimillion-dollar result for the corporation," says Kallman. "If I dropped the ball and Island Def Jam comes in tomorrow and says, 'We want it for Rihanna,' I could



have cost the company millions of dollars by not attacking."

There's also a new mix of an upcoming Estelle single to play and a series of brand-new tracks to analyze. "This man don't sleep," says Wonder, who Kallman hopes could become a house producer for the label, bringing in an endless procession of songwriters like Samuel. "What Berry Gordy had, with Holland-Dozier-Holland, Marvin Gaye and Stevie Wonder all in the same place, competing to write the best songs," says Kallman, "we're trying to get that same thing going.

Today's Atlantic Records is "A&Rdriven" in a fashion that Atlantic's co-

founder, the consummate record man Ahmet Ertegun, would have understood - built around talent scouts finding commercial songs or, in many cases, assembling them piece by piece: For hip-hop and R&B tunes in particular, they may spend weeks or months sifting through competing ideas for the right melody. Earlier tonight, at a smaller studio blocks away, Kallman rejected the hook of a track by rapper Maino ("This is terrible," Kallman says flatly), sending his A&R rep scrambling for a new chorus.

At the same time, Atlantic is pushing itself into a post-CD world; in 2008, it became the first label to sell more than 50 percent of its music as digital files. "It's not preparing for a digital future - we're in the digital business," says Greenwald.

"When Flo Rida sells 8 million tracks, that's 800,000 album equivalents. Why isn't everyone jumping up and down?'

All of the label's new contracts with bands are so-called 360 deals, giving Atlantic a cut of acts' merchandising, touring, fan clubs and other nonrecorded music revenue - so the label now has departments focused on touring and merchandise. "It's about, how do we grow all of your businesses?" says Greenwald. "How do we do what's right not just by looking at [profit and loss] on one album but taking a very long-term approach? How do I get you to become an arena-touring act someday and sell a ton of T-shirts, music, whatever?'

Ertegun co-founded Atlantic in 1947, but the label's current incarnation only dates to 2004, when Atlantic merged with another Warner Music Group label, Elektra Records, in the wake of Edgar Bronfman Jr.'s acquisition of WMG. Atlantic and Elektra had more than 400 employees, and the merger led to a brutal wave of layoffs, as well as a chance to rethink the company from scratch. Both Kallman and Greenwald came into the major-label system from indies - Greenwald was an early employee of Cohen at Def Jam Records, rising from his assistant to running the promotions department at age 24, and eventually getting a stake of the company (which earned her a substantial sum when it was sold and merged with Island Records). When Cohen left Island Def Jam to head Warner Music Group, Greenwald followed. She set clear boundaries between her responsibilities and Kallman's, who she describes as the label's "special sauce" - someone who can take a record "from A to A-plus." "I said, 'Craig, you don't have to come to the marketing meeting, I got this," Greenwald says, "and it was a huge relief for him. Unlike Craig,







Atlantic's diverse roster includes the punk-pop band Paramore (1), Zac Brown (2), leader of the country hitmakers Zac Brown Band, and the hippie-popster Jason Mraz (3)

I'll never try to be in the mix. I don't have dog ears. I have a good sense of what I think will work, what the strategy should be about it, but I'm about building culture and building a company and building a delivery system and providing services to the client, which is the artist.'

Kallman began his career DJing at New York's Cat Club and Danceteria as a teenager. After graduating from Brown University - where he became famous for bringing in national acts to play huge parties - he founded Big Beat Records, which Atlantic Records bought in 1991. He has extraordinarily broad tastes, and from an early age, he methodically schooled himself in every genre of popular music. "As a DJ, if Danceteria or the Palladium had any kind of night, I wanted to be able to do it, whether it was krautrock, dub reggae night or electro.*

Ertegun spoke of developing a second ear - the idea of going beyond one's individual taste to listen with the masses in mind - but Kallman doesn't approach music that way. "For me, it's all one ear," he says. "I only want to sign things that I absolutely love and I'm passionate about, and if I really love it, it probably has a chance to be very successful."

Atlantic has been as aggressive as any label in pursuing 360 deals, beginning with a groundbreaking 2005 pact with Paramore. These deals obviously benefit record labels, but Atlantic is making a case that they can be good for the artists, too: As execs discuss baby bands - the hardrock act Circa Survive, the jammy Jonathan Tyler and the Northern Lights - in an artist-development meeting one afternoon, it becomes clear that the company is focused on selling the acts themselves as much as any particular album. "These are full 360 rock bands," Matt Galle, who

> runs Atlantic label partner Photo Finish, reminds the room, "so everything we do here is to build their business." There's much discussion of bands' official websites, which sell merch and downloadable music "DTF" direct to fans. Jonathan Tyler's website is giving away recordings of dozens of live shows with the label's full assistance - a move that would make little sense if Atlantic didn't have a stake in Tyler's touring future.

> Atlantic's execs are aware that major labels have a bad reputation in 2010 - many music fans believe them to be as evil as they are obsolete - and the general assumption seems to be that with the democratizing influence of the Internet, big labels serve little purpose. But Kallman is convinced that A&R people are more valuable than ever. "The need

has increased," he says. "And I think that's where, as an industry, we've done a bad job of explaining what our role is, and why it has such important value - because the public doesn't want to sift through 14 million bands to find their music." And even the most independent of artists need professional guidance, he adds: "Even Prince talk about a guy who needs an editor. He's a genius, but if you go through the last albums that he's done on his own, and maybe the albums when he was on Warner Bros., and you tell me, if you could only own five, which five would you want to own?

Greenwald is convinced that to break through on a mass scale, artists need the kind of promotion her team can provide. "It takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of manpower, and it takes money; it takes people banging down the doors of gatekeepers every day," she says. "The thing about it is, you see who's having commercial success, there's always the logo next to their name of a major label. So I always say, 'There's a billion bands out there on the Internet. Who's the filter, and who's putting up the money to help that band get there? What happens if we're not here?'

BECAUSE A HIP-HOP LEGEND AND A RECORD EXECUTIVE ARE BRINGING HI-FI BACK

HERE ARE A LOT OF REASONS FOR Interscope Geffen A&M Records chairman Jimmy Iovine to be annoyed by the MP3 era – but what really drives him crazy isn't the part where it destroyed his industry's entire business model. "Our eye was

all on stealing, but actually two things were happening - there was a hurricane and an earthquake," he says. "People are not caring about music because it doesn't sound right - it sounds like crap." Iovine complains that too many people listen to low-bitrate files through poorly designed hardware and cheap earbuds. "The entire ecosystem of digital music has been completely destroyed," he says.

Iovine and his partner, Dr. Dre, have set out to introduce a new generation to high-

fidelity sound, with Beats by Dr. Dre, an audiohardware company that produces high-end headphones (see No. 26) and custom sound software and hardware for a laptop computer (the HP Envy 15). Next up is a wider variety of laptops, boomboxes, speakers and more. Dre, Iovine and their music-industry friends (Pharrell, Will.i.am, Timbaland) supervised the Beats "sound profile," which disregards

audiophile-approved ideas of clean sound and flat frequency response, instead embracing fat bass and a certain amount of benign distortion. "What a guy is able to feel in a \$2 million studio, we've given you in headphones," Iovine boasts, noting that they're not just for hip-hop: He's convinced that no headphones better capture the Seventies records he produced or engineered, from Tom Petty's Damn the Torpedoes to Bruce Springsteen's Born to Run.

"I want to make a lot of money on this," says Iovine. "But I also want to make the sound of the music better."



No.27 Ridiculously cool gear is coming

The country's top futurists predict the awesome music gadgets we'll see in the next decade



The Terabyte Music Phone

By 2020, you'll be able to hold 250,000 songs in the palm of your hand. Average mobile devices could hit 50 gigabytes of storage, with high-end phones holding one terabyte. The challenge will be to keep things running. "Progress in battery technology cannot keep up with phone features," says tech analyst Martin Olausson, "and we will likely see shorter battery life."

Search by Humming

Computer scientists at Northwestern University are building Tunebot, an online service that matches a riff you sing against a database. Bryan Pardo, the project's engineering lead, says the Tunebot database could grow from the current few thousand songs to millions by 2015.



The Micro Music Player

Think MP3 players couldn't get any smaller than an iPod shuffle? Wrong. A music player can be housed on a chip the size of an earring, and controlled by voice.

'Minority Report' Music

Eventually, you'll be able to create music with a wave of your hands. Motion-sensing cameras, like the upcoming Project Natal from Microsoft, will let you trigger sounds with a flick of your wrist or legs. "We will progress from devices such as keyboards to immersive environments in which we use our muscles to shape rich musical tapestries," says futurist Ray Kurzweil.

No.26 HEADPHONES ARE BETTER THAN EVER

Sick of those factory narhody? These broubshorns are worth the extra con-



Monster's Beats by Dr. Dre Studio

These aggressive headphones have a superpowered low end and are driven beautifully by iPods – great for rock and hip-hop fans. (But try not to snap the plastic band at the top.)



Shure SE530

Three tiny drivers - for bass, mids and treble - make these in-ears the equivalent of a high-end stereo inside your head. They might block outside sound too effectively - watch out crossing the street.



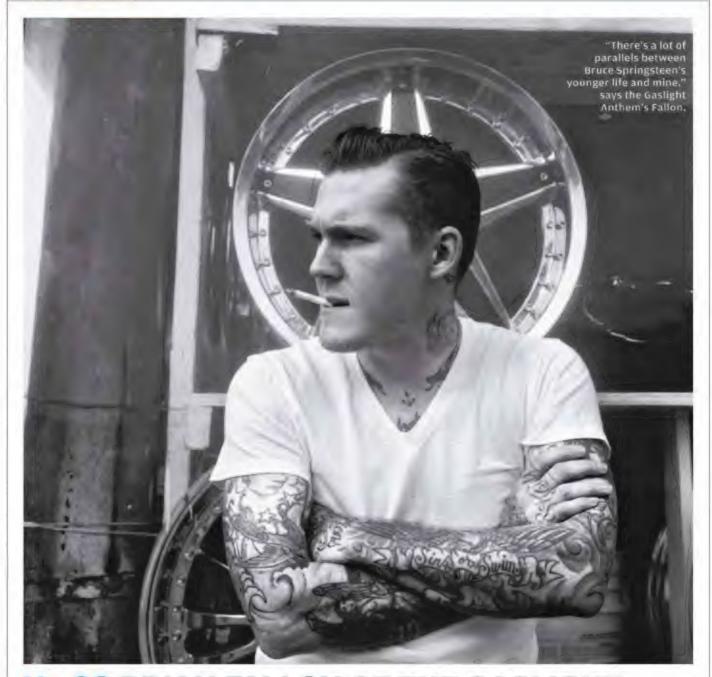
Ultimate Ears 18 Pro

\$1,350 for a pair of headphones? Ridiculous! Until you try them, that is. These custom-fitted "in-ear monitors" deliver sound that's so precise and dynamic, you'll feel like you're in a concert hall.



Etymotic Custom-Fit

A more affordable custom-headphone alternative to the Ultimate Ears, coming to the United States later this year. They're going to cost about \$250 - a decent price for top-shelf earbuds.



No.28 BRIAN FALLON OF THE GASLIGHT

ASLIGHT ANTHEM SINGER BRIAN Fallon is a T-shirt-wearing blue-collar dude from central New Jersey who roars beer-soaked tunes about broken dreams and hard-fought redemption - so he tends to hear plenty of comparisons to a certain other singer. "There's a lot of parallels between Bruce Springsteen's younger life and mine," says Fallon, who worked as a carpenter before his band broke out with 2008's punk-meets-classic-rock LP The '59 Sound. "We came from the same area, and there's a certain sense that everybody loses down there. So you almost

feel that you want to win for everybody that you're carrying on a lot of people's concerns, and their hopes, and their stories."

But Fallon's original inspiration was another gravel-voiced rock hero, Social Distortion frontman Mike Ness. At age 11, Fallon was stunned by the band's "Story of My Life" video. "I saw Mike Ness on TV, and I said, 'This is the perfect blend of everything my mom played for me - the Stones, the Who, Springsteen, Dylan and punk stuff I was getting into.' I saw those tattoos, and I was like, 'This is what I want to look like."

Ness has toured with the Gaslight Anthem and is a fan. "I'm so sick of generic punk-rock bands," he says. "It's refreshing when someone takes a risk. Brian has that certain amount of conviction that you gotta have."

The '59 Sound made its influences obvious, quoting the likes of Tom Petty and Bob Seger. But on the more eclectic American Slang - which draws on the Clash, Motown and the Pretenders - due June 15th, the band is moving forward. "We proved we were from a tradition that's lasted for a long time," says Fallon. "Now it's time to put down our own page."

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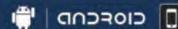




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DR. LUKE'S AWESOMELY TRASHY POP SOUND IS RULING THE AIRWAVES

R. LUKE, THE MOST RELIABLE hitmaker in the music business today, is sitting in an expensive Los Angeles studio drinking milk out of a freshly cracked coconut, editing kick-drum sounds. He looks like a camp counselor who just rolled out of bed: tousled hair, yellow Lacoste shirt and white plastic flip-flops. His clients, the teenage pop-rap group New Boyz, sit on a couch with their laptops open, tweeting away. Luke's assistant brings him a hookah loaded with apple-flavored tobacco. Sucking on the nozzle, he listens to his work and pronounces a verdict: "It needs lasers! And cymbals. How can it be a hit without lasers and cymbals?

Scientific research suggests that pop radio would still exist without Dr. Luke – it would just be a lot less fun. Some of the hit singles Luke has had a hand in writing or producing: Ke\$ha's "TiK ToK," Flo Rida's "Right Round," Katy Perry's "I Kissed a Girl," Avril Lavigne's "Girlfriend," Kelly Clarkson's "Since U Been Gone" and last year's inescapable anthem, Miley Cyrus' "Party in the U.S.A."

"Somebody should straight-up extract his brain juice," says Ke\$ha. "He farts hit songs."

"People can get one Number One single by accident, even two," says the 36-year-old Luke. "But once you get three...." The going rate for a producer of his stature is more than \$100,000 a track. He works hard in the studio but keeps the atmosphere loose. When he was toiling on Perry's new album, Perry borrowed Luke's laptop and tweeted as him, asking if it was OK to find himself attracted to boys. Luke retaliated by tweeting as Perry, and her 2 million followers read, "Is it normal to have the recurrent rash with blisters on my vagina?"

Tonight, Luke has relinquished the seat at his laptop to a sleepy-cyed young producer named Ammo. "I want big stadium rave chords," Luke instructs. He asks the New Boyz if the beat is something they could rap to. Ben J., 18, nods and says, "That shit is tight."

Luke switches from one keyboard to another. After layering four synth parts, he

has a groovy sci-fi hip-hop track. Luke listens to the playback, and judges, "There's anthemic energy." He puts one ironic fist in the air and saves the file as "UR MOMMA."

Dr. Luke, born Lukasz Gottwald, grew up in New York, the child of an architect and an interior designer. He bought his first record when he was in the third grade: the Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight." When he was 13, he picked up his older sister's guitar and taught himself to play the B-52's' "Rock Lobster." That led him to more classic rock, blues and, for two years, nothing but jazz. He was also a teenage drug dealer. "I was 15 years old and walking around with \$15,000 in my pocket," Luke says. "I was stupid – I'd jump the turnstile in the subway with a few pounds of weed in my backpack." (He

ed money to build my studio. And I got dropped before the studio got built."

Undeterred, Luke started DJ'ing - his first gig was an opening slot for the Chemical Brothers, which he got through with his hands shaking. He kept practicing and became a regular at New York clubs. He got friendly with Max Martin, the hugely successful Swedish producer-songwriter, and eventually Luke and Martin wrote some songs together. The first one was "Since U Been Gone." The inspiration: When they listened to indie-rock bands, like the Hives and the Strokes, Martin complained, "Why can't they just write a hit chorus?" Luke and Martin became frequent collaborators, masters of taking a simple idea and making it feel inevitable. "What's really hard about producing is getting to the point," Martin says. "There's a tendency to float away and

"SOMEBODY SHOULD EXTRACT HIS BRAIN JUICE," SAYS KE\$HA. "HE FARTS HIT SONGS."

says he usually sold a pound at a time, to "other dealers mostly.") Luke got kicked out of several private schools, including St. Luke's and the Little Red School House – but he didn't quit dealing until he turned 17 and his guitar teacher told him he needed to stop if he wanted to get serious about music. While many parents might have been worried about a child skipping college to become a musician, Luke's folks regarded this new career choice as a serious upgrade.

Luke paid his rent playing guitar in sessions and for commercials. In 1997, when he was 24, he got a plum job as the lead guitarist in the Saturday Night Live house band; he stayed for a decade. In his spare time, he did remixes of hip-hop singles (he got tagged with the Dr. Luke name during a Mos Def session) and made electronic music with a DJ called Liquid Todd. Luke began to draw attention from labels. "I got three record deals, and I wasn't even trying," he recalls. "But I never wanted to be on the front of the stage, so I convinced the record company I need-

add too much shit. Luke's always been particular about getting to the point."

Luke tries to avoid the parts of the music business he regards as not fun – such as the ongoing search for the next boy band. "Everybody is looking for a kid group," he says. "I know it makes sense from a business point of view but not from a creative standpoint. Would you let kids rewrite the Constitution? Well, maybe they shouldn't be singing about love or despair."

On another night in the studio, Luke constructs a track for the rapper B.o.B, spending hours fiddling with Pro Tools, meticulously tweaking every detail. He stays up until 3:30 a.m., hunched over the computer while his engineer sleeps on the studio couch. "Could I have farmed it out?" Luke asks. "Probably, but I know how I want it done, and then it's just done once."

That's how the doctor works, says Perry:
"My experience with Luke is different than all my other experiences with producers.
We do five or six choruses before we find the right one. Until it's pure Abba perfection, it's not coming out."

GAVIN EDWARDS



ROOTS ARE ON TV EVERY NIGHT

ET'S JUST SAY IT: THE Roots are the hottest band to ever have a regular slot on TV. On Late Night With Jimmy Fallon, they deliver living-room jam sessions long on hip-hop beats, screaming P-Funk guitar blasts and endless musical punch lines. The walk-on soundtrack for guest Thomas Lennon of Reno 911!: N.W.A's "Fuck Tha Police"; for Steve Kroft of 60 Minutes: a funky stopwatch tick. "They've got great comic timing." says Fallon. "My guests are as psyched to see the Roots as the audience is to see the guests - it's like they're at a Roots concert. The show wouldn't be what it is without them."

"We had huge chips on our shoulders to prove we still had it," says bandleader Ahmir "?uestlove" Thompson. "There's no precedent for an established band taking a gig like this." The Roots have stretched what a late-night band can do by putting together newsworthy combinations: Southern rap legends Goodie Mob reunited one night, Christopher Cross and Michael McDonald another. After backing Monsters of Folk on the show, the two bands remade "Dear God" for the forthcoming Roots album.

When the Roots accepted the Fallon gig in late 2008, skeptics - and even some members of the group - thought it would be a retirement gig. It's been anything but. Daily rehearsing, a previously alien practice, has honed the band's chops samurai-sharp. And the Roots go to extremes, often breaking to the airport straight off Fallon's closing notes for their next gig. "It was just what we needed," says Thompson, a workaholic who likes to play wee-hour DJ sets after the band's concerts. "Our live shows have gotten better, our songwriting has gotten better. Over the last year we wrote, oh, about 900 songs." WILL HERMES



No.31 RUSSELL BRAND'S PLAN TO SAVE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

The world's greatest fake rock star diagnoses the three biggest problems with the music business - and offers his prescription to fix it By Russell Brand

You can't let children decide what's popular

There's just way too much turnover, too many transient pop stars. The music I listen to is mostly by the dead and dying, which is how I want my rock stars: Syd Barrett, Jimi Hendrix and the Doors. Nick Cave still seems pretty healthy, and so does Tom Waits, but these are not your typical thrusting, glistening, bubblegum pop stars. All children should be made to listen to music by people who wrote it on acid while staring wistfully at water.

2 Don't record until you've been in rehab

The top of the hit parade would look very different if teenyboppers were exposed to heroin. It would weed a lot of them out. I don't think Justin Bieber could handle Syd Barrett's habit. You're just not allowed into the studio until you first have had drug-addiction issues. It separates the men from the boys. A lot of people in their journey to rehab overdose, and then, perhaps, we would be spared their awful music. It's Darwinian. It's the law of natural selection.

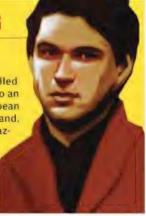
No more cross-genres. Leave things be

Hip-hop was purer in the beginning. It was harder. Like punk was harder. Things get muted down when they go mainstream. On a social level, I believe we are all one, and we should all blend together and live in Utopia, but musically let's keep these genres very tight. No rap metal, for instance, or thrash gospel made by deeply pious Satanists. If Ghostbusters taught us anything, it's "Don't cross the streams."

WHAT I'M EXCITED ABOUT BY EZRA KOENIG

Brainy Music Bloggers

I hear a lot of great things for the first time from this blog called Wayneandwax.com. It's run by Wayne Marshall, who's a DJ but also an ethnomusicologist at MIT. He writes a lot about all kinds of Caribbean genres – dancehall, reggaeton, soca – which is music that, as a band, we're really interested in. What's cool is that he DJs – he did this amazing mix tracing the historical evolution of the reggaeton beat over the years – but he can also write intelligently about the music. It's part dance mix, part term paper. There's this false dichotomy that you can either appreciate music in a visceral way or in a sociological way, but he proves that wrong.



If anyone deserves to inherit Jennings' mantle as country's badass, it's the 34-year-old Johnson. A former corporal in the Marine Reserve, Johnson toiled for years on Nashville's fringes, playing in dive bars and eventually finding success on the Music Row songwriting circuit. His break came when he co-wrote Trace Adkins' bootylicious 2005 hit "Honky Tonk Badonkadonk." Johnson then released a flop solo debut before his 2008 record. That Lonesome Song, catapulted him to stardom. A slew of accolades and awards have followed.

That Lonesome Song is packed with hard-bitten tales of drugs, depression and divorce, delivered in a thick Bama drawl over rugged honky-tonk backing, "When we put Lonesome out, I worried about the road that my daughter would be traveling down when she listens to her daddy's music," Johnson says. His daughter, age six, plays in the lounge area just outside the studio. She lives in Nashville with Johnson's ex but frequently hangs out while her dad records: "I talked to my ex-wife about it. I made the decision that, whether it's right or wrong for her now, eventually she's gonna grow up and listen, and I want her to get the truth."

He asks an engineer to cue up some songs from his new

"The black one goes down a path of self-destruction; the white one goes down a path of self-redemption,"

Johnson says. The Guitar Song looks back to Johnson's day and by the self-redemption in the self-red day and honed his craft playing honky-tonks at night. "It's basically the story of being a honky-tonk singer," he says. "It ain't all pretty, and it ain't all fun. But it's definitely livin' life about as hard as you can live it."

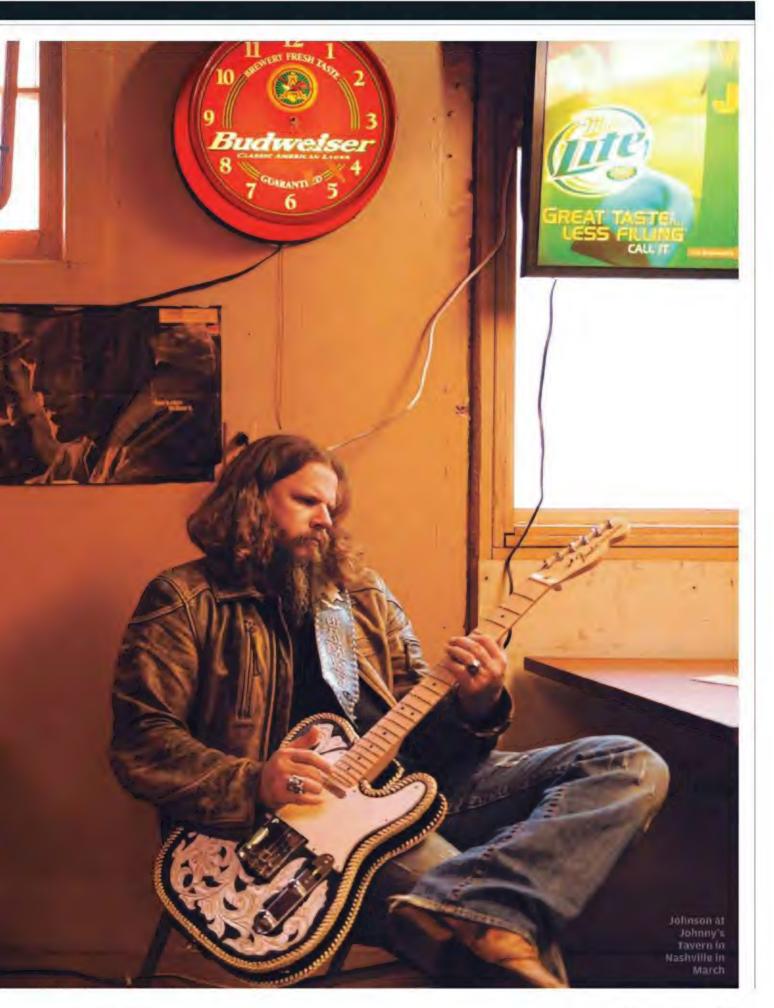
These days Johnson doesn't live quite as hard, although he cops to a weakness for Jack Daniel's, and he still likes to keep party-animal hours. "I usually go to sleep about five or six in the morning. 'Insomniac' would be a good name for it - I can stay up for three damn days, no problem."

The new album takes in a range of styles: stark acoustic blues, soul-style ballads awash in Hammond B3 organ, a scathing satire about L.A. (which Johnson wrote "after I did some bullshit TV show"). The title track is an ambling novelty song: two guitars talking in a pawn shop. And then there's "Macon," a lusty come-on laced with Lynyrd Skynyrd-style guitar licks. Johnson smiles: "If you're gonna write a song about fuckin', and it's gonna be set in south Georgia, it can only sound one way."

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No.32 JAMEY JOHNSON BADASS COUNTRY IS STILL **ALIVE IN NASHVILLE**

woise





ORGET MY DAD/YOU NEED TO HEAR my band!" Coco Sumner sang on her 2008 tune "My Name Is a Stain." The ragamuffin-ish 19-year-old singer with model looks happens to be Sting's daughter, though she's doing her best to live it down. "I got my first guitar at age four, learned how to play Jimi Hendrix, and I've been playing open mikes since I was 14," she says. "No one taught me how to do this - I taught myself." Island Records noticed her London shows and Internet tracks, and signed her to a multi-album deal. Her band I

Blame Coco's debut album, The Constant, due out later this year, displays an Eighties-style, beat-driven, punk-tinged bounce; Swedish dance diva Robyn appears on the record, and Sumner plays drums, synths, bass and guitar with boundless energy. The first single, "Caesar," is a hard-charging dance cut. "I wrote it out of frustration," Sumner says. "My label wanted a single, so I wrote an angry song about having to write pop music to impress them. But when I played it for them, they said, 'It's brilliant!' I thought, 'What? You're not supposed to like it!"



No.34 DEREK TRUCKS IS ERIC

VERY GENERATION NEEDS a guitar god, and Derek Trucks was born for the job. Literally: As the nephew of Allman Brothers Band drummer Butch Trucks, this dude has been on the road playing blues guitar since he was nine. He joined the Allmans before he was old enough to buy a beer. At the grizzled age of 30, he's hitting new heights - check out his 14-minute version of Coltrane's "Afro Blue," on his new live album, Roadsongs. "When I'm doing the Allman Brothers, the teeth are out a little more," Trucks says. But his friend and tourmate Eric Clapton puts it more simply: "Derek has a voice."

No.35 Because Vinyl Sales Have Tripled Since 2006

HE MOST UNEXPECTED comeback of recent years wasn't the Police or Led Zeppelin - it's vinyl. "Everyone is starting to realize what was good about the old technology," says Beck, who has released all his albums on wax. Last year, 2.5 million LPs were sold, up 33 percent from 2008, and any semi-hip act - the Black Keys, the Hold Steady, Jack Johnson - rolls out its new album on vinyl. Labels are reissuing back-catalog gems from Black Sabbath, Neil Young and Wilco. "Vinyl has more emotion," says Beck. "It makes you feel like there's something important about the music."

THE FIRST GURFINICH





No.36 T BONE BURNETT IS A ONE-MAN ROOTS REVIVA

O ONE KNOWS AMERICAN ROOTS music like producer T Bone Burnett. The man has an uncanny knack for making records that aim right for the heart, combining old-time folky mystique with populist appeal. He's given the world surprise hits like the O Brother, Where Art Thou? soundtrack, the Robert Plant/Alison Krauss duet Raising Sand and his own Oscar-winning Crazy Heart theme, "The Weary Kind." Burnett brings out the best in a wide range of artists - this year alone he has new albums with Willie Nelson, Jakob Dylan,

Steve Earle, Elvis Costello and the duo of Elton John and Leon Russell. For John Mellencamp's upcoming No Better Than This, he cut live at Sun Studio in Memphis and a Texas hotel room where Robert Johnson recorded his blues sides. "It isn't so much about rock & roll, more about the song," says Mellencamp. "I used to arrange the shit out of songs. He and I never arrange anything."

"The way I work, nobody tells anybody what to do," says Burnett. "Just accept what the musicians give you. Then they sound like a million bucks." DAVID FRICKE

No.37 The Classic-Rock Vaults Are Far From Empty

BOB DYLAN

What's in the vaults: Underground favorites such as an early New York version of Blood



of touring has been released.

What's next: There's usually a new installment of The Bootleg Series each year Dylan doesn't release a new disc - which means this year. "We'd like to release superfan stuff. like the entire 'Like a Rolling Stone' session or the complete Blonde on Blonde sessions," says a source close to Dylan.

NEIL YOUNG

What's in the vaults: At least four shelved studio LPs, including Human Highway (1974), Homegrown (1975), Chrome Dreams (1977) and Toast (2000).

What's next: The second edition of Young's Archives megabox - which will cover his creative peak of 1972-82 - could come out this fall.

THE BEATLES

What's in the vaults: Hundreds of outtakes, from the infamous

> 1962 audition for Decca (the label turned them. down) to 1969's ill-fated Get Back sessions.

What's next: Paul McCartney says he wants to release a 14-minute 1967 psyche-

delic jam called "Carnival of Light."

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

What's in the vaults: Studio sessions from The River and Nebraska, legendary radio broadcasts from the Seventies and two shelved 1990s albums, one hiphop-influenced.

on the Edge of Town box, due this year, "It hasn't been our style to release every show and that type of thing," says Springsteen's manager, Jon Landau. ANDY GREENE

What's next: Just a Darkness



ANIMAL COLLECTIVE ARE THE KINGS OF THE NEW PSYCHEDELIC SCENE

NIMAL COLLECTIVE AREN'T EXACTLY a band and don't really play rock, but they fit into the far-out tradition of acts like the Grateful Dead, Pink Floyd and Smile-era Beach Boys. "The spirit of the psychedelic music of the Sixties was never about nostalgia - it was about looking forward, looking for new sounds, and that's what we do," says Animal Collective's Brian Weitz (known as Geologist), who manipulates samples and electronic effects for the group. "The word 'psychedelic' makes people think of old music, but it's still the best word to describe us." Their improv-heavy shows are somewhere between an Acid Test and a rave; one woozy techno jam flows into the next while their fans bug out to a mind-bending light show. "We all like the Dead, and they were really inspiring to us," says Weitz. "But DJ culture and beat-matching was just as inspiring. It's like what Can or Pink Floyd might

have done, where things break apart and then get built back up from chaos."

The band members - who also include Josh Dibb (Deakin) and Noah Lennox (Panda Bear) - have been friends since high school in Baltimore, where they bonded over horror flicks and Pavement. From the beginning, Animal Collective have cultivated an air of mystery, wearing masks and furry costumes at their earliest shows. They donned white horned masks and black robes for a recent experimental art installation at New York's Guggenheim Museum that drew thousands of fans. "Watching the movie, it makes me feel like I'm on drugs," says multi-instrumentalist Dave Portner (Avey Tare). So what are these dudes smoking? As it ends up, not that much. "We're usually sober when we're recording or performing," says Weitz. "If you want your audience to be as broad as possible, you can't just aim for the people on drugs." WILL HERMES

No.39 These Missingin-Action Albums Might Just Come Out

AMY WINEHOUSE

The latest: According to Roots drummer ?uestlove, Winehouse has contacted him about a "jazzy" project with Mos Def; she's also been spotted recording at Geejam Studios in Jamaica with Salaam Remi, who co-produced 2006's Back to Black. It's been reported that she wants to avoid the U.K. because of "bad influences back in London."

Estimated release date: Island Records U.K. executive and chief Winehouse point person Darcus Beese says the album will be out by year's end.

DR. DRE

The latest: Dre has been working on *Detox* since 2002. He just announced the impending release of "Under Pressure," a single with

Jay-Z. RZA has said he contributed to the album, and Lil Wayne, Drake and Nas are reportedly making appearances as well.

Estimated release date: This fall.



D'ANGELO

The latest: It's been 10 years since D'Angelo's classic Voodoo. In January, D'Angelo's management announced that he was working with Prince on a disc called James River. In February, D'Angelo's MySpace page said, "Album & Tour Summer 2010."

Estimated release date:
D'Angelo's manager has since said that this summer is overly optimistic; that James River isn't the name; and that Prince isn't confirmed.
But there's no question that D'Angelo is hard at work. "Everything happens when it's supposed to," D'Angelo says to ROLLING STONE. "I don't be-

WHAT I'M EXCITED ABOUT BY DAVID BYRNE

Musicians Taking Control

The romantic notion that musicians can't deal with the business aspect of things, or can't be interested in anything outside of their music - that has disappeared, thank God. When I was starting out, you were supposed to be stupid! Young musicians that I've worked with - St. Vincent, Dirty Projectors, the National - they are throwing away that whole lackadaisical attitude. But it's not just about business: These new acts are deeply involved in film, art and books. The National just curated an experimental music festival in Tennessee, they are collaborating with visual artists, they aren't just staring at their guitars. These musicians are more engaged in the world around them, and they are going to survive.



lieve in forcing art."

No.40 BECAUSE YOU REALLY LIKE MUSIC

It's true - despite the collapse of the music business, you still really, really like music. How do we know? We asked! ROLLING STONE surveyed 1.744 readers about the role music plays in their lives. Among the things we learned: You still primarily listen to music on CD (and a surprising amount on vinyl, with younger readers listening to records the most). We also discovered that some questions might be too obvious: One reader, asked why he listens to music, responded, "Asking me why I listen to music is like asking me why I breathe."

Imagine you had to give up all of the following forms of entertainment for a week, except one.

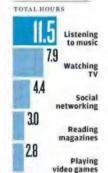
Which would you keep?

64.7%

LISTENING TO MUSIC



In an average week, how much time do you devote to each of the following activities?



HOW IMPORTANT IS MUSIC IN YOUR LIFE?

94.7%

EXTREMELY OR VERY IMPORTANT

What formats do you use to listen to music?

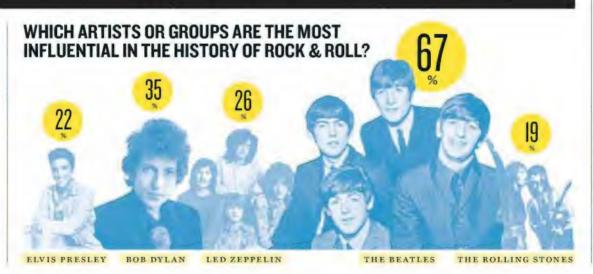


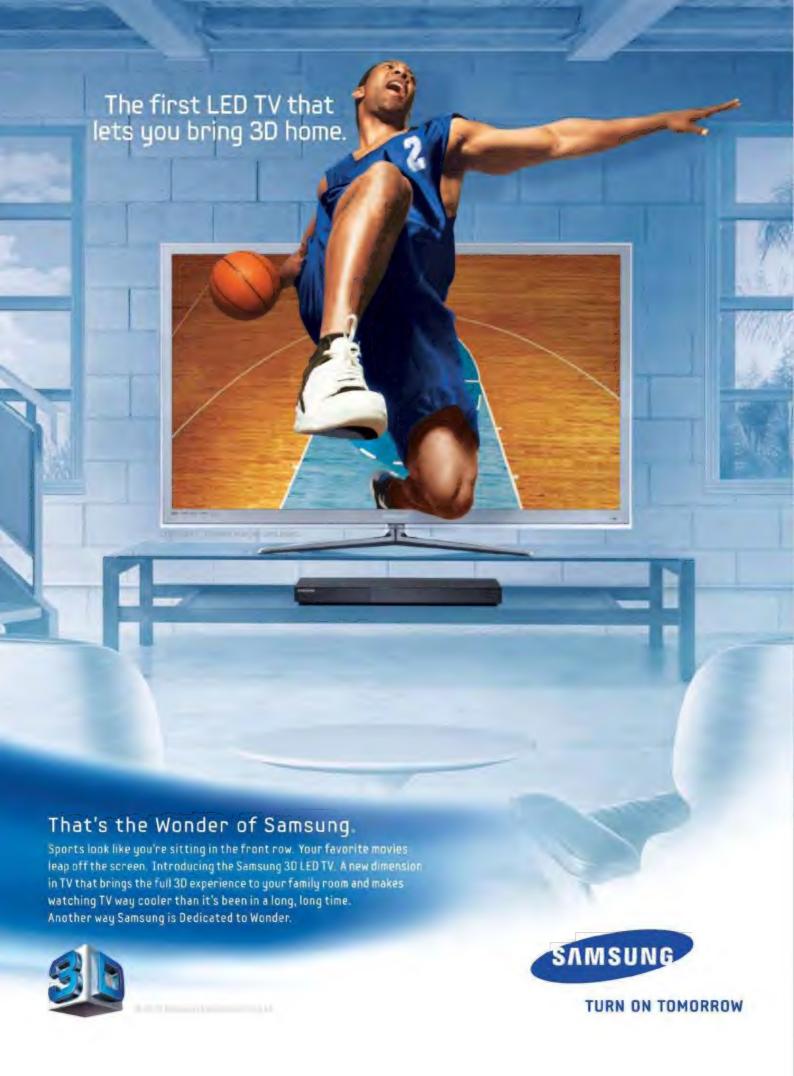
Average number of songs in your iTunes library 6,370

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'70s....26%

'90s....23%
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NEW CDS	Pg. 102
SINGLES	. Pg. 104
MOVIES	Pg. 109
CHARTS	Pg. 118



Courtney Love reminds the world why we cared in the first place

Hole ***

Nobody's Daughter Mercury

BY ROB SHEFFIELD



ON "NOBODY'S Daughter," Courtney Love sets out to reclaim her turf as

a musician. For some fans, going back to the Hole name is an admission of defeat, especially without any of her old bandmates. But it's more likely she's calling herself Hole to play down the Courtney Love cartoon - and remind everyone (including herself) that she first made her mark as a musician. She worked hard on these songs, instead of just babbling a bunch of druggy bullshit and assuming people would buy it, the way she did on her 2004 flop, America's Sweetheart.

The songs are sturdy, for the most part, with acoustic power chords chugging through standouts like "Samantha" ("Watch her wrap her legs around the world") and "Pacific Coast Highway." The lyrics are about junkies or sluts, or sometimes both, as in "Skinny Little Bitch." "Honey" is an ace ballad about sex and drugs: Junkie meets slut, slut loves junkie, junkie loves junk. It's basically the exact same tune as the Verve's Nineties Britrock classic "On Your Own." just as "Nobody's Daughter" sounds like Cracker's "Low" but that's just part of the Nineties vibe.

Love relies on the same L.A. pros who made America's Sweetheart and Celebrity Skin - Billy Corgan co-wrote

four of the songs, Linda Perry wrote or co-wrote five, and producer Michael Beinhorn gives everything a soft-focus rock glow. Unfortunately, Love seems to have blown her voice. In nearly every song, she croaks and gasps for breath, squeaking when she attempts to snarl. The slower the tempo, the harder she pushes to hold notes too long, as in the excruciating "For Once in Your Life" and "Someone Else's Bed."

Musically, Nobody's Daughter taps into the mellow-grunge mode, located between Soul Asylum's "Runaway Train" and Hole's "Malibu." But as a singer. Love can't hang with the Dave Pirner of 1992, the Courtney Love of 1998 or the Eddie Vedder of whenever. Even in the strong songs, the first verse is usually tough going; the backup choruses and guitar overdubs eventually come to the rescue, but you have to be a big fan to make it that far. Did they try to fix her vocals in the studio and fail? Or did they just think it sounded more rock & roll like this? Either way, yeesh. If Love is dead set on pretending she's a band, maybe she could hire Melissa Auf der Maur to sing?

Nobody's Daughter isn't a true success - but it's a noble effort. Whatever you think of Love's sparkling personality, she was an absolute monster vocalist in the Nineties, the greatest era ever for rock singers. She's remained a highprofile public presence, always game for a Twitter rampage or a celebrity-roast pratfall - but it was always that voice that made her matter. The way she sings on the 1994 Hole album Live Through This, on classics like "Miss World," "Doll Parts" and "Softer, Softest," remains a landmark of the rock & roll howl. (And if you ever doubt how much she influenced Kurt Cobain, listen to Nirvana's Nevermind and In Utero back to back and note the vowel-shredding Courtney snarl he picked up in between.) She doesn't have that power in her lungs anymore - barely a trace. But at least she remembers, and that means something in itself.

Key Tracks: "Skinny Little Bitch," "Honey"

A Punk-Rock Classic Gets Even Fiercer

Reissue restores producer David Bowie's unique mix and adds a fun house of extras

Iggy and the Stooges ****

Raw Power: Deluxe Edition Columbia/Legacy REISSUE



TO EVEN HEAR THE RHYTHM SECTION ON co-producer David Bowie's 1973 mix of *Raw Power*, you need to crank the volume until it feels like James Williamson's reckless guitar leads are piercing your skull. That's the

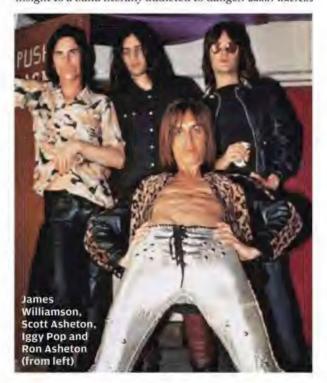
vicious beauty of it. A 1997 reissue of the album experimented with a thicker, less dynamic mix; this new version reinstates Bowie's trebly, off-kilter production while adding clarity and heft the original LP lacked. Finally, the third and most brutal album from these Detroit legends gets both the rawness and the power it deserves.

Iggy Pop delivers these desperate anthems as if he's lived

every self-mythologizing line. "I'm a runaway son of the nuclear A-bomb," he rants in "Search and Destroy," embodying glam rock's theatricality while dumping its affectations. New band member William-

Key Tracks: "Search and Destroy," "Gimme Danger (live)"

son, along with bassist Ron Asheton and drummer brother Scott Asheton, flail in a synchronized wallop that almost single-handedly invented punk. This new deluxe edition adds an equally unhinged 1973 Atlanta performance with confrontational banter and previously unreleased spasms like "Cock in My Pocket," plus a third disc of outtakes, a "Making of Raw Power" documentary DVD and testimonials from acolytes such as Lou Reed, Joan Jett, Tom Morello, Henry Rollins and Chrissie Hynde. Every addition adds insight to a band literally addicted to danger. BARRY WALTERS



Merle Haggard

I Am What I Am Vanguard

Country legend shakes a fist, tugs heartstrings, cracks wise



NO ONE, BUT NO one, does populist defiance like Merle Haggard. ("Okie From

Muskogee," anyone?) The country legend's latest album opens with an instant classic of the genre, "I've Seen It Go Away," a honky-tonking prophesy of national decay: "I've watched it all completely fall apart/And I've seen our greatest leaders break the people's heart." Haggard breezes through ersatzmariachi tunes ("Mexican Bands") and delivers cutting love songs - check out "Stranger in the City," about a roadwarrior musician who refuses to cheat. But it's the hard-boiled stuff that really brings a lump to the throat - when it's not cracking you up. "I believe Jesus is God," Haggard sings on the title track, "and a pig is just ham." JODY ROSEN

Key Tracks: "I've Seen It Go Away," "Stranger in the City"

Melissa Etheridge ★★★½

Fearless Love Island

Guitar-rock firebrand makes fierce return



"FEARLESS Love," Melissa Etheridge's feistiest disc since her 1988 debut, blurs

the difference between hardearned personal experience and social commentary. In "Miss California," she voices her frustration with California's recent anti-gay-marriage amendment by addressing the state as if it were a wayward lover: "I know the hand that's trying to hold me down/ Is the one I'm trying to hold." For "The Wanting of You," Etheridge sets "Born to Run" riffs against a tale of a married woman who constantly lusts for another, reminding you that she's best when she brings both intensity and compassion. B.W.

Key Tracks: "Miss California," "Fearless Love," "Indiana"



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TOP SINGLES

Band of Horses

* * *1/2

"Compliments" Leaked

"I'm fixin' a drink in the morning, with the way things are," sings Ben Bridwell on the first single from his band's third LP. Warning a companion that they "may have stayed too long," he describes a log house he built and ponders the existence of God over a bouncy hand-clap groove, organ swells and Neil Young-y guitar. It's as irresistible as anything the band has done - if Bridwell builds houses like he does tunes, he's got a great fallback career. WILL HERMES

Kelis ★★★¹/₂ "Acapella"

All major services

Seven years after "Milkshake" shook up the schoolyard, new mom and recent divorcee Kelis gets her club buzz on with an assist from producer du jour David Guetta. The French DI blends a gently tribal thump with taut synth pulses, and Kelis provides heavenly harmonies, cooing about renewal over the lush chorus. "Before you, my whole life was a cappella/Now a symphony is the only song to sing." CARYN GANZ

Flying Lotus feat. Thom Yorke ***½

"... And the World Laughs With You" Leaked

A couple of years back, L.A. hip-hop surrealist Flying Lotus remixed Radiohead's "Reckoner" into an alluring funereal ooze. On the marquee track from his forthcoming Cosmogramma, he has Thom Yorke's distracted falsetto sounding even more resplendently ghostly. Gnashing dub-step grind gives way to a soft, pensive throb as Yorke pines, "I need to know you're out there," like he's languidly floating SOS signals from an emotional ice station.

JON DOLAN



Christina Aguilera Gets Dirty Again

Christina Aguilera ★★★

"Not Myself Tonight" All major services

Please, no cracks about how when Aguilera says she's "Not Myself Tonight," she sounds like Lady Gaga instead. This electrocheese club banger might be her best dance track since "Genie in a Bottle." Producer Polow Da Don piles on the plush Euro-disco synth flourishes while Aguilera moans, "That feels good, I needed that." Aguilera has never had much luck with disco – her voice is too fussy and busy to function as a dance-floor sound effect – but on this track, she melds her pipes with the synths, and the result sounds like an outtake from *The Fame* or Britney's Blackout. The best moment hits at the two-minute mark, when her voice flickers on the word "toni-i-ight," turning into a strobe-light flash. This song was obviously designed to cold-rock bachelorette parties, so get set to hear it the next time some blitzed bridesmaid spills her Disaronno-and-Sprite on you.

The Keys Tighten It Up Black Keys ****

"Tighten Up" myspace.com/theblackkeys



The Black Keys re-teamed with Danger Mouse to cut the first single off their new record and they've never sounded tighter or funkier. Drummer Patrick Carney pounds the skins like a drugged-up Keith Moon, and Dan Auerbach cranks out a spiky riff that's laced with Hendrix-style guitar effects. "Tighten Up" is definitely psychedelic, but these guys still have a thing for the blues: Auerbach yelps, "Sick for days ... I'm aching now," with the raw intensity of Robert Johnson at the crossroads.

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Rufus Wainwright

***1/2

All Days Are Nights: Songs for Lulu Decca

Wainwright strips down sound on sad sixth album



RUFUS WAINwright's melancholic sixth album is deeply touched by the spirit of his

mother, folk eminence Kate McGarrigle, who died this past January of clear-cell sarcoma, a rare form of cancer. Just voice and piano, uncluttered by his hallmark orchestral bigness, it's Wainwright's most nakedly emotional music vet. His brooding compositions recall European art songs and sad old Broadway; he shoulders his burden with Garlandesque brio, and even gentle cattiness. "Time to go up north and see Mother," he entreats his younger sister on "Martha." "Neither of us is really that much older than each other, anymore." JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "Zebulon," "Who Are You New York?" "Martha"

Kate Nash



My Best Friend Is You Fiction/Geffen

22-year-old singer overshares with awesome abandon



topped the U.K. charts with her 2008 debut, Made of Bricks.

on which she delivered spiky piano pop and made good use of the term "dickhead." Her latest album deserves to go global. The music is by turns Brit-pop brassy and riot-grrrl raw, and Nash suggests a less genteel Regina Spektor with a taste for punk noise. She's still plagued with relationship ills, but now the stakes are higher. Longing for a woman's kiss, f-bombing a girl for selling herself short, and tasting the barrel of a gun, Nash is an oversharing spitfire who won't be ignored - not to mention a huge talent. WILL HERMES

Key Tracks: "I Just Love You More," "Mansion Song"

MUSIC TECH

Killer Home Theaters in a Box



Onkyo HT-S6200 ***1/2

\$700, onkyo.com

WHAT IT IS A high-performing home-theater receiver with seven speakers, a subwoofer and an iPod dock.

WHAT WORKS At \$700, it's a bargain. Setup is a cinch thanks to color-coded inputs and connectors, and the four HDMI inputs mean you can rock the latest sound formats, like Dolby TrueHD and DTS-HD Master Audio, in their full 7.1 glory.

WHAT DOESN'T The included lighter-than-air speakers sound thin, especially when you're playing songs in plain old stereo; you're better off sticking with surround sound.



Bose 3-2-1 GSX Series III ****/2

\$1,500, bose.com

WHAT IT IS A slick CD/DVD player that also lets you rip up to 200 hours of MP3s onto its hard drive, plus two bookshelf speakers and a subwoofer.

WHAT WORKS It provides spacious sound delivery with solid bass and a realistic surroundsound experience in a simple package, making it ideal for small apartments.

WHAT DOESN'T The plugs for the speaker wires are proprietary, so upgrades or replacements come from Bose. And the receiver lacks an HDMI input, so any external HD components will have to work through lesser connections.



Denon S-302 Entertainment System **

\$1,200, usa.denon.com

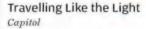
WHAT IT IS Integrated DVD player and A/V receiver with two flat speakers and a powerful subwoofer. It lets you play music off your PC wirelessly.

WHAT WORKS The small size is perfect for an office or apartment. Sound is surprisingly robust, with thumping bass from the tiny subwoofer.

WHAT DOESN'T There's no HDMI in, so you have to connect other high-def sources via component cables. Plus, the iPod dock is sold separately.

TOM SAMILJAN

V V Brown ***1/2



Doo-wop, soul, girl-group and rock, all in one cool package



IN THE U.K., where they churn out soul revivalists like Cornish pasties, V V

Brown stands apart. A 26year-old singer of Jamaican and Puerto Rican descent from Northampton, Brown sings in a Tina Turner-like throaty howl and has a retro-perfect flat-top quiff. But her music floats exhilaratingly outside of time, blending thumping garage-rock rhythms, doo-wop chords, Spectorian girl-group stylings and, in the delicious "Crazy Amazing," a melody lifted from the piano-student favorite "Heart and Soul." Even the breakup songs sound like rave-ups - old-school party music that seems right at home in 2010. JODY ROSEN

Key Tracks: "Crazy Amazing," "Crying Blood"

The Apples in Stereo

Travellers in Space and Time Yep Roc/Simian

Studio geeks dream of future. Freaky fun ensues



"WHAT DO YOU see when you dream about the future?" asks Robert Schneider.

If you're him - studio-geek guru of the Elephant 6 family and frontman of a band long obsessed with re-animating Sixties psych pop - you evidently see Hall and Oates fronting the Electric Light Orchestra with vocoder tubes in their mouths while cyborgs do the Bus Stop. It's a spectacular genre exercise filled with analog-synth storms, cowbells and sugary hooks. "You know you feel blue/When you're out of sync with your C.P.U.," observes Schneider over robotic garage rock. Funny, and yet so true.

Key Tracks: "Hey Elevator," "Told You Once," "C.P.U."

Cornershop



Judy Sucks a Lemon for Breakfast Ample Play

Catchy optimism from world's best Anglo-Punjabi rock band



THESE LONDONers' mash-up of Southeast Asian elements and hummable Brit

pop made them one of the best left-field bands of the Nineties. On their first album in eight years, leader Tjinder Singh sounds easygoing even as he grouses about war and the music biz. His tunes pack in little charms - from clarinets to Stones riffs to Buddy Holly harmonies. On "Free Love," ambient hum and Indian melody combine for psych-rock beauty, and the 16-minute closer, "The Turned On Truth," blends sitar and soul divas. Singh sounds a little more blissed out than before - but every bit as appealing. CHRISTIAN HOARD

Key Tracks: "Free Love,"
"Who Fingered Rock 'n' Roll"

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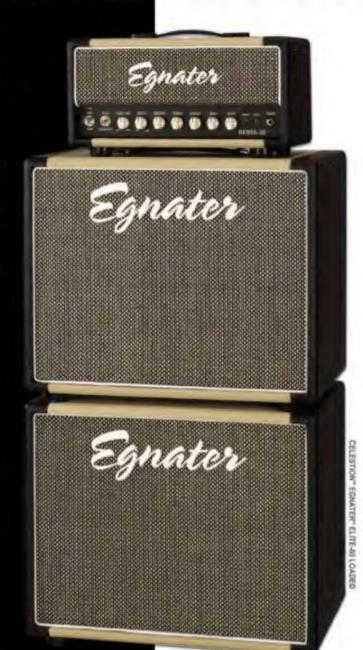
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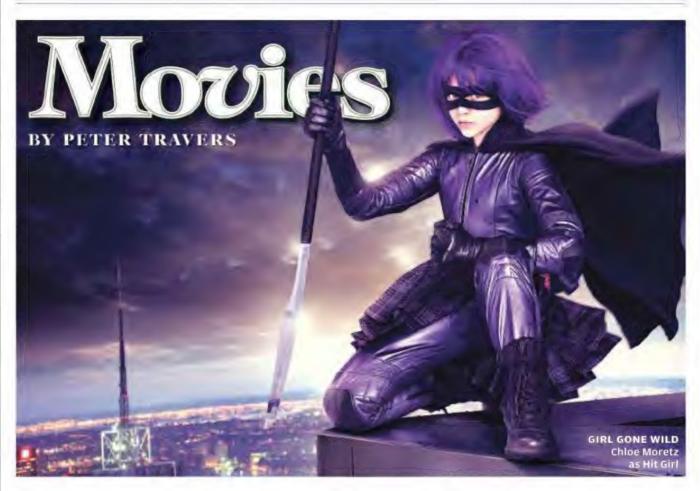
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Shocks to the System

Comic-book movies don't drop f-bombs, abuse children or gush blood. 'Kick-Ass' does

Kick-Ass ★★★

Aaron Johnson, Chloe Moretz, Christopher Mintz-Plasse, Nicolas Cage Directed by Matthew Vaughn

YOUTH, DANGER, FUN, RULEbusting defiance. That's the juice of rock & roll. It's also the juice in *Kick-Ass*, a mosh pit of a comic-book movie that dares

you to dive into its anarchy. Even when the film swerves off its twisty tracks, there's something potently unslick about the take of Brit director Matthew Vaughn (*Layer Cake, Stardust*) on the vision of writer Mark Millar (*Wanted*). Ever since audiences got a pervy taste of *Kick-Ass* at July's

been nervously clenching.

The hate is aimed at Hit Girl, an 11-year-old killer with a Mamet mouth, a Tarantino jones for violence and a vigilante Big Daddy (Nicolas Cage)

Comic-Con, tight-asses have



who teaches her to avenge the death of her mother. "OK, you cunts, let's see what you can do," hisses Hit Girl, before decimating her enemies with a butterfly knife (a gift from Daddy) in a scene of bug-fuck gore set to the kiddie theme from The Banana Splits. As played in spectacular fashion by Chloe Moretz, 13 - the sis in (500) Days of Summer - Hit Girl, suited up in purple and deliciously unsuited for mass consumption, is a nightmare for the Christian right.

The same goes for the R-rated movie, a roaring blast of rude comic energy done on an indie budget (\$30 million) with help from producer Brad Pitt and a profane script by Vaughn and

Jane Goldman that glories in breaching Hollywood rules.

Take Kick-Ass himself. That'd be Dave Lizewski (a terrific Aaron Johnson, the young John Lennon in the upcoming Nowhere Boy), a New York high school geek whose only interest besides comics and video games is making deposits in the whack-off warehouse while drooling over the boobs of his English teacher. Ordering a green wet suit off the Internet, Dave turns himself into Kick-Ass, a superhero with a limi-

tation: He has no superpowers. Still, he's a viral sensation on MySpace and YouTube, and is soon the target of a drug cartel headed by Frank D'Amico (Mark Strong), who sets up his son Chris (*Superbad*'s Christopher Mintz-Plasse) as a caped crusader, Red Mist – the idea being to win the trust of Kick-Ass and then betray him. Mintz-Plasse breaks way past the bounds of McLovin to create a complex character of surprising grit.

Still, the movie belongs to Moretz, whose sensational performance will be talked about for years. Her scenes with Cage, who wears a Batsuit and uses a voice borrowed from Adam West, are a hoot. But Vaughn gives his film version of *Kick-Ass* distinction by showing a keen eye for the broken places in his characters. They live in a world of hurt that's not so easy to laugh off.

Date Night

* *1/2

Tina Fey, Steve Carell Directed by Shawn Levy

HERE'S PROOF THAT TINA Fey and Steve Carell could squeeze laughs out of a phone book. Josh Klausner's script for Date Night, in which they play Phil and Claire Foster, a New Jersey couple trying to liven up their dull marriage with a glam date in the Big Apple, rivals the Yellow Pages for dry and utilitarian. And yet their teamwork turns it into comic bliss.

Director Shawn Levy (Night at the Museum) tosses in a museum of clichés, from gun battles to car chases. There's even

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an embarrassing strip-club sequence in which both stars get to bump and grind. And I haven't even mentioned the star cameos: Kristen Wiig and Mark Ruffalo as soon-to-be divorcees from New Jersey; James Franco and Mila Kunis as the couple the Fosters impersonate to steal their reservation at a chic Tribeca restaurant; and Common and Jimmi Simpson as the hoods who want them dead. Best of all is Mark Wahlberg in a nifty bit of selfsatire as a shirtless weapons

expert. Still, if you're thinking all the star shine sounds like padding, you'd be right.

Date Night, which superficially resembles Martin Scorsese's After Hours, is too soft to go for the turbulence roiling under this tamped-down marriage. But watching 30 Rock's Liz Lemon and The Office's Michael Scott spark each other is enough. Stay for the outtakes – they're improv delights, suggesting the movie that might have been if they had just left it all to Carell and Fey.

The Secret in Their Eyes

***1/2

Ricardo Darin, Soledad Villamil

Directed by Juan José Campanella

HAVING JUST WON THE Academy Award as the year's best foreign-language film, The Secret in Their Eyes has a decent shot at wearing down resistance to subtitled films. Don't be put off. This spellbinder from Argentina will sneak up and floor you. It's that good.

Ricardo Darin is brilliant as Benjamin, a criminal-court investigator who is tormented by the unsolved rape and murder of a young bride in 1974, and by the military junta that devastated his country around the same time. We watch as Beniamin and Sandoval (the superb Guillermo Francella), his alcoholic partner, work with the victim's husband, Ricardo (Pablo Rago), to identify the killer. Photos, especially those revealing the eyes of the killer, play a major role in the discov-



ery. In a thunderously exciting chase scene through a Buenos Aires stadium during a heated soccer match, Benjamin and Sandoval hunt their prey, only to find him given shelter by the corrupt government of the new Argentina.

Now, 25 years later, the retired Benjamin begins writing a novel to resolve his need for closure and his feelings for Judge Irene Menéndez Hastings (Soledad Villamil, fiercely good). Out of a fabric of suspense that would have fascinated Alfred Hitchcock, director Juan José Campanella, best known in the U.S. for his work on Law & Order SVU, House and 30 Rock, weaves a moral fable that manages to pack a powerhouse punch and still be as intimate as a whisper. The highest praise is due Darin and Villamil for letting the unspoken passion between these two characters play out in their eyes. You won't be able to take your own eyes off them, or to get this supremely intelligent and deeply touching thriller out of your head.



Exit Through the Gift Shop

Directed by Banksy

A DOCUMENTARY ON THE art world may strike you as a yawn. No worries. You'll be laughing helplessly at this one. The subject is Banksy, the British graffiti artist who studiously avoids being photographed, the better to launch his illegal bursts of creativity on walls and buildings, soon erased.

Shockingly, or perhaps out of a need to see his street art preserved, Banksy lets French videographer Thierry Guetta shoot his work. Then, when Guetta starts making his own art, Banksy switches roles and directs a movie about Guetta. We see Banksy in the shadows, his voice disguised, his amusement uncontained at what the world sees as art and how much they'll pay for it.

Exit Through the Gift Shop, a title that tilts wittily at the commercialization of the underground, only sounds nuts. The wild ride of a film, narrated with mock seriousness by Rhys Ifans, sees the art world as a circus, taking in the nut jobs and the celebrated likes of Shepard Fairey, Neckface, Swoon and Banksy himself. We watch in shock and awe as Guetta reinvents himself as the artist Mr. Brainwash, fooling the media and himself in the process. Or maybe not. The line between making guerrilla art and selling out has never blurred more provocatively.

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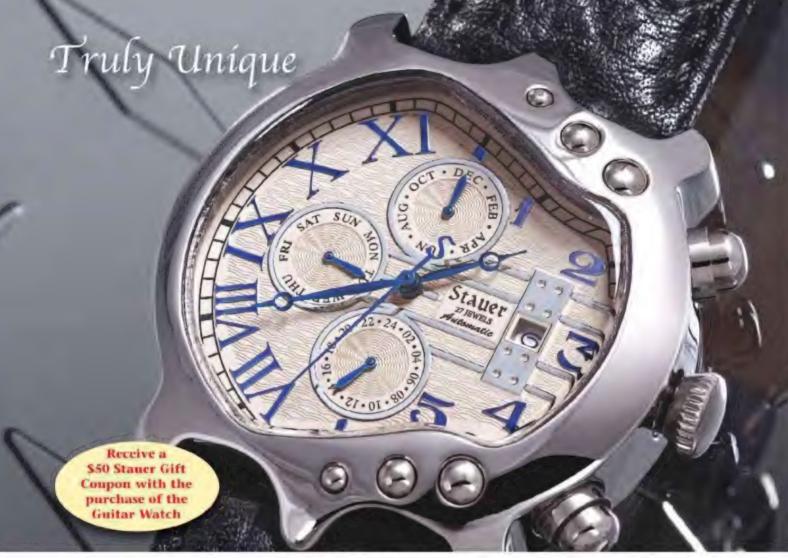
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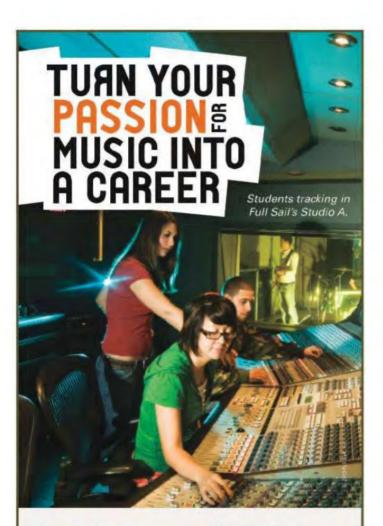
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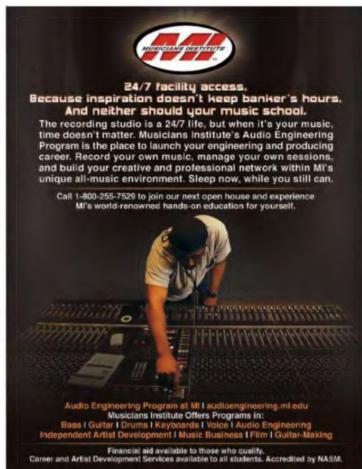
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- Miley Cyrus When I Look at You" - Hollywood
- **Black Eyed Peas**
- 10 Lady Antebellum

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COLLEGE RADIO **TOP 10 ALBUMS**

- 1 Gorillaz Plastic Beach - Virgin
- 2 Broken Bells Broken Bells - Columbia
- **Dum Dum Girls** I Will Be - Sub Por
- She and Him Volume Two - Merge
- Ted Leo and the Pharmacists The Brutalist Bricks - Matado
- Yeasayer Odd Blood - Secretiv Canadian
- Joanna Newsom Have One on Me - Drag City
- Sisterworld Mute
- **Local Natives**
- 10 Beach House



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From the Vault

RS 702, February 23rd, 1995

TOP 10 SINGLES

- Madonna Take a Bow" - Maverick/Sire
- "Creep" LaFace Boyz II Men
- 'On Bended Knee" Motown
- Real McCov Another Night" - Arista
- Brandy Baby" - Atlanti

TLC

- Soul for Real 'Candy Rain" - Uptown
- Des'ree You Gotta Be" - 550 Music
- Brownstone 'If You Love Me" - MJJ Music
- 4 P.M. (For Positive Music)
- 10 Hootie and the Blowfish 'Hold My Hand"



On the Cover

"Live Aid was such a fucking atrocity for us. The whole idea of playing 'Stairway to Heaven' with two drummers while Duran Duran cried on the side of the stage - there was something really quite surreal about that. I thought, 'Are we Sinatra? Is this "My Way"?' -Robert Plant

Top 40 Albums

	(100	
1	NEW	Usher Raymond v Raymond - LaFace/live
2	1	Justin Bieber My World 2.O - RBMG/Island
3	3	NOW 33 Various Artists - Universal/EMI/Sony Music
4	NEW	Erykah Badu New Amerykah Part Two: Return of the Ankh - Control Freag/Universal Motown
5	4	Lady Antebellum Need You Now - Capitol Nashville
6	2	Monica Still Standing - I
7	NEW	Alan Jackson Freight Train - Arista Nashville
8	5	Justin Bieber My World (EP) - RBMG/Island
9	8	Lady Gaga The Fame - Streamline/KonLive/ Cherrytree/Interscope
10	10	Black Eyed Peas The E.N.D Will.i.am/Interscope
11	7	Ludacris Battle of the Sexes - DTP/Def Jam
12	NEW	Meth/Ghost/Rae Wu-Massacre - Wu-Tang/Def Jam
13	9	Marvin Sapp

- Here I Am Verity 14 30 Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel
- Soundtrack F 15 11 Sade Soldier of Love - Epi
- 16 19 **Taylor Swift**
- 17 15 **Lady Gaga** The Fame Monster (EP) - Streamline, 18 14 Ke\$ha
- Animal Kempsahe/RCA 19 13 Zac Brown Band The Foundation - Roar/Bigger Picture/
- Selena Gomez and the Scene 20 35 Jimi Hendrix 21 12 Valleys of Neptune - Experience Hendrix/
- 22 21 Lil Wayne Rebirth - cash Money/Universal Mot
- **Barenaked Ladies** All in Good Time 24 18 Michael Bublé
- Crazy Love 143/Reprise 25 20 Rihanna
- Rated R SRP/Def Jan **Radio Disney Jams 12** 26 ME
- Various Artists Walt Disne 27 31 **Carrie Underwood** Play On - 19/Arista Nas
- 28 6 **She and Him**
- 29 16 Gorillaz Plastic Beach - Virg 30 42 **Kidz Bop Kids** Kidz Bop 17 - Razor & T
- 31 25 **Trey Songz** Ready - Song Book/Atlant

33 22

- The Twilight Saga: 32 17 **New Moon** Soundtrack -
- **Broken Bells** Broken Bells - col 34 MIN **Gretchen Wilson**
- I Got Your Country Right Here Redneck 35 26 Alicia Keys The Element of Freedom - MBK/J
- 36 24 **Blake Shelton** Hillbilly Bone (EP) - Reprise/
- 37 27 Susan Boyle
- I Dreamed a Dream Syco/Columbia 38 64 Miley Cyrus
- The Time of Our Lives (EP) Hollywood 39 33 **Young Money** We Are Young Money - Cash Money/
- 40 43 **TobyMac**



Usher Back on Top Buoved by the radio smash "Hey Daddy (Daddy's Home)," Usher's sixth LP - featuring Diddy and Will.i.am - sold 329,000 copies its first week out.



Amerykan Skin Cable pundits were out-

raged over Erykah Badu's racy "Window Seat" video, but fans didn't mind: Her latest LP sold 110,000 copies in its first week.



Still Barenaked

Even though singer Steven Page quit in 2009 - after an arrest for cocaine possession - the Barenaked Ladies' latest record still debuted in the Top 25.



Almost Famous

She and Him are selling well for an indie act: Their second album of retro pop debuted at Number Six last week and has sold 66,186 over two weeks.

OO Chart position on April 7th, 2010 00 Chart position on March 31st, 2010 New Entry A Greatest Gainer Re-Entry



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